POT-POURRI PARISIEN

BY

E. BRYHAM PARSONS

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DEDICATED

TO

MONSIEUR LUC-OLIVIER MERSON,

Entered at Stationers' Hall, London.

* With regard to the title of this book, it is interesting to note that the word "Pot-Pourri" is often used in French as applied to a song which is composed of several different airs, one succeeding the other in a single song—a sort of mixture of symphonies.

PREFACE

I have sought in writing and subsequently arranging this book to place things in the order in which they come and to leave practically untouched the impressions of each period of my life in Paris. I have carefully avoided the dangerous practice of inserting afterthoughts in the midst of past impressions. Only by adherence to this rule can one trace the gradual changes that take place in the ideas of a stranger who is living permanently in a foreign country. His first impressions are almost all negatived by later experience.

To-day I regard the French as a race whose star is in the descendant. To-morrow my impressions may change, for I fasten myself to no dogma. The French may recover a purer religious instinct than that which led them before, and upon the ruins of which they now hastily trample. Their administrative departments may emerge from the corruption of jobbery; the decoration of the Legion of Honour may once again be placed beyond the bid of wealthy purchasers and become the reward of valour instead of cunning.

The intrinsic qualities of the French race abide—courtesy, honesty, and purity now and again emerge from the surface of the flood of atheism, and without doubt there are units of the French army who, devoid of treachery and unblinded by conceit, are still worthy to stand under those tattered and glorious Napoleonic banners which formerly floated over three-quarters of European territory.

ERNEST B. PARSONS.

February 14, 1910.

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CHAPTER I.

HOW I CAME TO PARIS.

The Man in the Newspaper Shop which I frequented in Bloomsbury told me before ever I started that people who went to Paris rarely came back. They were not all murdered, said he, but a good many were. They got run over, and killed in the Underground Railways, and assassinated in broad daylight. Strangely enough, the man who spoke thus slightingly of Paris is himself a foreigner. He would not, he said, go to Paris on any account. I argued with him about that and protested that very many wealthy Americans and Englishmen went to Paris for a week's amusement, and came back alive. But his gloomy views were in no wise disturbed, and I left him full of dark forebodings for my future.

The landlady, on the contrary, cherished cheerful recollections of her ten days' stay in the Gay City. She was especially amused at having been asked by her French friends, who had brought her over for the holiday, to run out and get some milk at the adjoining milk-shop, being instructed to ask for some "Doolay." "What a name!" she expostulated laughingly, when telling me her experiences. Her pronunciation of "du lait" was certainly calculated to astonish the natives.

It was my intention, many days ago, in the halcyon times when they dismissed me from the office doors with three weeks' money and a clear conscience to boot—it was my distinct intention to take a holiday.

But take warning, oh stay-at-home Britisher, who has never learnt the art of holiday-making, and who says to himself: "Well, I don't know where to go, and I certainly don't want to spend money that's necessary for a holiday. I have so many claims upon me at home; I can't afford to

go abroad, and Paris is the only city I really want to visit." Cease these arguments, sir, or you will do as I did—stay at home for the best part of your holiday, pay no just debts, yet spend as much money as would have carried you to Venice and back. And mark this—the true holiday pays for itself. The incidental experiences, cropping up on every side of the railroad and hovering even over the awful tempestuous sea, which fills the cabin of our steamboat with groaning victims—these same incidental experiences are thrown in gratis, and help to make up a holiday.

I do wish they would hurry up and make the Channel Tunnel. Surely this stupendous feat of engineering, if it were immediately put in hand, would effectually cement the "entente cordiale"? As I lay in the stern of the good ship that ploughed her way over the uneasy and dismal Channel to-day, I seemed so entirely ignored by the ship's crew that I hailed a certain good-looking sort of skipper who sauntered by, crying out to him in my agony:—

"I suppose there is nothing I can do to stop this?"

"Nothing," he replied. "And," he added cheerfully, as he turned on his heel about his duties, "the man who finds a remedy for that will make a fortune."

The words sank into my mind. I remembered and shall remember the dismal sights that that skipper sees every other day—the great saloon, pitching and tossing as the ship pitches and tosses; every couch occupied by a recumbent figure, deadly pale, with a basin resting by his side. Pale, delicate ladies put to the torture; strong men made to look fools—there they lie, a prey to the whims of the ocean—at the mercy of the winds and the waves.

A fortune awaits the man who can obviate this daily misery. And that man will surely be the engineer of the Channel Tunnel.

In what other department of life would a company dare to subject its patrons to such anguish and indignity? Many of us have no great desire to see the sea in the glory of its roughness. We would much rather rattle cheerfully along under the ocean bed, keeping nice and dry and tidy.

I thought I was doing the best thing for myself in standing down on deck at the stern of the boat, taking off my hat so as to have plenty of fresh air round my head and trying to take an interest in the rapidly receding coast line of Folkestone. But I presently found myself clutching the gunwale, leaning over, completely vanquished. The greatest philosophy was of no avail whatever. One by one the outposts of one's determination not to be ill under any circumstances were overcome. And by the time we had

reached Boulogne I was thoroughly done up. The other passengers seemed astonished to see someone enduring these penalties and agonies out in the open, instead of resigning himself to a couch in the cabin.

One lady, who looked quite a stoic when she started out, watched me from the saloon window, and I afterwards realized that the expression of amusement that her face wore during the first half-hour of the crossing was occasioned by her complete realization of the fact that I should sooner or later give in. I was doubly astonished to find, on looking up at her window later on, that she herself was being attended to by a smiling steward. But that is all over now.

Boulogne Harbour at last! I wish I had a painting of the man with keen grey eyes and sharp-pointed beard who seized my bag as we descended from the boat and demanded half a franc for carrying it through the Customs. He was an amusing character. After paying our English porters at Charing Cross twopence for no heavier service, it seemed rough to be pounced on at Boulogne—while I was yet hardly recovered from mal de mer—by a wiry, loose-bloused, plausible, and picturesque French commissionaire, with a villainous stoop, and told to pay fivepence or to suffer the contumely of a foreign despot. I objected, and he promptly brought out of his pocket and showed me a small printed card, setting out his legal charges as a commissionaire—"One bag, Fr.0.50," etc., etc. I merely said: "Peut être vous avez écrit cela!" But he did not seem over-anxious to assume authorship of the little printed card. He protested that it was genuine, inspired—a sort of Government document, "une chose terrible."

I am doing Paris three days on twenty francs, so have to study economy.

"En voiture!" We clamber up and take our seats. The third-class carriages are extremely uncomfortable, but no matter. We are at last actually bound for the French capital. In the fields that lie between Boulogne and Paris I watched, as our train sped by, some of the real, fine, old peasant class, with blue smocks and clear-cut, clean-shaven, sometimes wisely wrinkled faces, standing at the doors of their cottages or working in the fields. They were the first distinct and actual reminder that England had passed away swallowed up in the sea-storms, and that we were on the Continent.

Thus it was, diverted by a hundred odd incidents, I found my way to Paris, arriving just before dark.

The Gare du Nord was positively packed with people. I had no French money in my pocket, but on approaching a

group of railway officials, a man in plain clothes detached himself from them and began to speak English to me. He led me, at my request, to a shop outside, where he gave me, as I afterwards ascertained, the exactly correct change for a sovereign in francs and sous and saw me into a taximétre or regulation cab, telling me to pay the cocher not more than two francs for the drive down to Rue Jacob, across the Seine, in the Latin Quarter. This obliging individual seemed quite contented with the small amount I gave him, telling me that I should always find him on the platform of the station when I required him.

I greatly enjoyed the drive through the busy, brightly-lit streets of the capital. I once went to Venice in London, and spent half an hour in its market-place and on the bridges, listening to the Venetian boatmen swearing at each other, and Paris reminds me of that. But there is more to it. An eternal cracking of whips. I have never heard London drivers crack their whips in this way—with so much gusto —sharp reports like pistol-shots. My white-hatted driver seemed to be setting a fine loud example to the rest. This is a sort of French "aside"—they must have a music of some sort to accompany them wherever they go.

Then, hundreds of thousands of foreign faces, all worth studying—the real foreign type—not the sort you meet in Bloomsbury, London.

We crossed the Pont des Saints-Péres, and on arrival at the hotel in the Rue Jacob I found that establishment a most homely and interesting one, with a large courtyard on the inner side of the white entrance gates. Here, in the courtyard, a long dinner table was set, and a party of English excursionists, many of them travelling under the auspices of Cook's or the Polytechnic, sat enjoying their good food and gratis red wine. I soon joined them and did my best with the red wine, which tasted all the better in that it was included in the humble six francs which I paid per day at that hotel. I much prefer this wine to English beer. It gives one an appetite and makes one feel no worse but a great deal better, even taken in large quantities.

Two American ladies, with a little girl—a charming, grave-eyed child, with regular features, very French-looking, I thought—formed part of our party at meal times.

The great courtyard of the hotel was always a delight to me. Here one might sit on a bench after dinner, secure in a quiet harbourage, yet within easy reach of the sounds and the sights of the busy streets—smoking strong cigarettes of the kind one buys in Oxford-blue packets all over Paris. Above one gleamed the lights of the many rooms of

the hotel—lights which shone far up overhead from windows invariably open night and day and the frames of which were encircled with flowering creepers. The manager, a very pleasant and engaging young Frenchman, assisted by two male waiters who did the work ordinarily undertaken by housemaids in England, as well as the duties belonging customarily to waiters, helped to make us comfortable by leaving us to do as we pleased. Our breakfast, served either in the open courtyard of the hotel or in the salle-à-manger within, was ready at any time we liked, and greatly resembled the English morning meal. It was always delightful to rise early in the morning and saunter out down the Rue de l'Université, or up towards the Boulevard Saint-Germain, and watch the hurrying throng of French people on their way to work, stepping along so gaily and as sprightly as though they were starting out on a pleasure excursion—so many bright interchanges of pleasant courtesy, pretty girls on their way to the shops, and women going to or returning from the markets. Then one strolled into breakfast and afterwards started the round of sight-seeing.

But these early morning streets—how bright and fresh they were. It seemed as though the dawn—pressing closely upon the sound of the last midnight footsteps and smothered sighs and laughter of students wending their way through the Latin Quarter with or without female companions—had descended with joy and eagerness upon these well-washed streets and white stone buildings, which have never known the degradation of a winter's fog such as our streets suffer here in London—this sooty experience having been spared them in the Gay City.

The Rue de Rome contains an especially pleasant recollection for me. Here I walked and talked with a Parisienne who was one of the prettiest and wittiest women I had ever met. She was married, and ours was a harmless flirtation which ended as happily as it began. Her society seemed to me the essence of the best of Paris. This great Rue de Rome, stretching away seemingly for ever, I first saw in the gloaming, and it conveyed, even apart from its name, a vague and hazy impression of eternity. Running on apparently for ever in a straight line, one imagined oneself escaping at last by means of it into the fertile plans of Italy. Coupled as it was in my mind with the vision of sweetness and light whom I have just referred to, its attractions were irresistible, and thither I wended my way whenever I tired of the main centre of this fascinating city. Yet, alas! how rapidly one's impressions fade away. "L'Etoile" (as I

called her, for her eyes were like stars) becomes a name—a dazzling souvenir only, growing more dim every day. Set in a blaze of new sensations, the centre of a four days' wonder—the diamond on the crest of a crown of new experience—l'Etoile fades away out of my recollections.

The French are a gay, jaunty race. They trust to each other's good sense in the open streets and are seldom run over—in spite of the ponderous steam tramcars which forge ahead at every moment, crashing on their way down brilliantly-lit boulevards. These trams, with their formidable and ponderous length of carriages, are somewhat out of place amidst the grandeur of a city which might have been planned and built by the gods.

A certain code of formality seems to form the basis of the French character. It is not, however, a formality such as we meet with over here—standoffish, red-tape-like in its origin—but a genuine and hearty formality, which puts backbone into the slightest actions of life and scorns to show the white feather or to make a gloomy answer however circumstances may press. Indeed, one is forced to the conclusion that circumstances never do press much in France. One cannot squeeze blood out of a stone; nor can one discover a single specimen, apparently, of a genuinely humiliated, sulky, or gloomy Frenchman or woman. As you pass them in the streets, as you meet them in the cafés, they radiate with a sort of Continental sunshine, as though each one of them possess a sense enabling them to place the highest possible value on life. They walk along like people who are every day being forgiven afresh by their Creator and who are rejoicing continually, so that Fate is shamed into pleasing them—just as one cannot find it in one's heart to deny a smiling child its simple requests.

The French, by the way, have no word equivalent to our "shocking." They only imitate the English word, in fun, putting the accent on the second syllable—"shock-*ing*"—or rather, they make two distinct words of the two syllables. This significant absence of a word which is so useful over here to denote our horror, our prudery, our holding up of hands in dismay, gives the key to another phase of French character. Stripping life of unnecessary "shocks," whether prudish, moral, or otherwise, they in no way relax their strict codes of morality—that is, the better class of citizens; and woe-betide the stranger who, taking advantage of their seeming ignorance of the word "shocking" shall encroach beyond the bounds of good taste. Blithe, jaunty, intrepid, and dainty, their women-folk pass on their way, knowing the world well enough not to fear it.

It is this "bon cameraderie" between men and women which makes the thoroughfares safe and pleasant, and the cafés as interesting as a garden-party. I speak always of the true French citizens—those who work, who read, who live in the best and fullest sense of the word—the city rings with their mirth. The restraints of town life in England are almost unknown to them. Whether their motto: "Liberté, Equalité, Fraternité" is justified in the French nation as a whole or not, it certainly seems to be a reflex of their character as individual citizens. Life to them is as a great fair, full of joy and amusement.

Renowned sculptors have flung before them in profusion, in prodigal quantities, in their lovely gardens and their magnificent and stately squares the poetry of beauty. At every turn of the Tuileries the glance is arrested by some fresh evidence of the art of perhaps the most artistic nation in the world. These faces of stone which gleam at you with such surpassing beauty, these figures which lean out towards you from their bowers of flowers in all attitudes of bewitching, grave, and voluptuous abandon; stretching out delicate hands as though to entreat you to observe the beauty of their workmanship—the amazing quantity and quality of these sculptured works induces one to believe that they have been showered upon the French nation by sculptors who loved their work so much that they carved them gratuitously and contributed them as their offering towards the general grace and gaiety of the nation.

The public buildings, the bridges, the fountains, are all one mass of glorious carving.

I travelled once or twice on the Metropolitan railway—not without a sense of impending danger. American engineers state that no non-inflammable material has yet been introduced on the French Metro.* This light-hearted, gay, careless nation seems, however, to have forgotten all about the holocaust on their underground. The tooting of their —well, they sound like tin trumpets!—makes the journey a merry one. The whistle of the engine-driver is always answered as the train starts from each station, by this tin-trumpeting sound from the other end of the train as a signal that all is well. The cry is heard, "En voiture!" and the noisy train crashed on into the next tunnel. Even in work they are like children at play. It was travelling thus that I arrived one night at the "Moulin Rouge" and was somewhat amused to find an actual mill-wheel revolving in the dark, amply illuminated with little red lamps which

* 1905.

went round and round on the arms of the wheel, the turret of the mill being equally well reproduced. Of course I had heard times and again of the "Moulin Rouge," but nobody had thought it worth while to tell me that there was an actual Red Mill there, and it leapt upon me with a delightful sense of actuality as I climbed the steps of the Underground and came up opposite the illuminated theatre, that there was more in the name than I had at first supposed. People always take it for granted that one knows everything and therefore they tell you nothing.

My heart was full of joy of seeing all these new things for the first time.

I managed to get out to Versailles, from the Gare de Montparnasse, travelling on the top of the railway carriage by way of an experience. These elevated seats, though somewhat dusty and uncomfortable, afford one an excellent view of the surrounding country, and as soon as we got some way beyond the fortifications, it became interesting to note the succession of charmingly-built country houses, hidden away behind the trees, in picturesque and secluded-looking gardens. I noticed here some fine old stone walls, thickly covered with fruit, each individual plum, peach, or pear being carefully wrapped up to preserve it from birds or bees.

On arriving at Versailles, I walked through miles of picture galleries in the Palace, and saw the great Chamber where the deputies used to sit to elect a new President once in seven years. I strolled for hours in the gardens, where the autumn leaves are now lying thickly. The mighty fountains were not playing, but the long stretches of ornamental waters, running in the aggregate for miles, between shady avenues of trees, were most imposing on that fine summer's day. The woods were wet with recent showers; but now the sun was shining, and the air was just pleasantly cool. Here Marie Antoinette must have wandered many a time. And here Napoleon walked alone, with folded arms, pondering his next campaign, or gathered his mighty marshals around him, and traced on the map the line of his next march. I saw in the Palace, shut away from the great bare magnificent gilded galleries, filled with the pictures of Napoleon's triumphs, the cosy and snug suite of rooms belonging solely to Marie Antoinette—an agreeable sanctuary, into which she might escape from the glitter and confusion of Court life.

I had lunch in a small "Bouillon" in the village. Everything was full of interest. The great dog, who belonged to the master of that establishment, seemed to be French, in

his way. For when in a new country the traveller looks out for everything that is new, and his expectations are constantly being realized, partly because he wishes to be convinced that he is enjoying himself. I was particularly struck, on landing at Boulogne, for instance, with the thought that these horses standing there in the station were French horses, and must have quite different ideas and antecedents to the English horse—an excusable conceit, no doubt, and one that lent enchantment to the view.

A long and tiring morning in the Louvre persuaded me that I much preferred the Galleries of the Musée de Luxembourg. The Louvre is too vast, too enormous, too dazzling. These acres of pictures and sculpture tire by reason of their quantity, however much one may be inclined to be enraptured with their quality. Looking at "Le Déluge," by Trionon, a picture of a young man clinging to a tree, his old father being seen clinging to his back, while with his one free hand the young man grasps the hand of his wife, from whose neck and hair is hanging her younger son, while in her arms she grasps a baby, all of them tottering over an abyss of ever-mounting waters—this vast picture, placed high on the walls, almost affects one with nausea. As, with craning neck, I gazed closer at it I noticed that the tree to which the whole cavalcade of human beings were hanging was broken, and might give way at any moment, when its human freight would be precipitated into the dark and gloomy waters of the rising tide. Staring ever upwards, in a species of fascination at the appalling catastrophe which was impending, a great giddiness overcame me, and I swang round, falling into the arms of a convenient gendarme, who, thinking I was intoxicated, conveyed me gently and firmly from the Louvre. I hope I am not exaggerating.

Once outside I stepped down quickly to the river Seine and took a steamboat to Saint Cloud. The sun shone out. The waters sparkled with a thousand diamond stars, which danced and glittered before us as we flew up the river, till the eyes were dazzled with the abundance and magnificence of these gems of sunshine. Past the Eiffel Tower, under a bridge from which leant down glorious stone apparitions, figures whose attitudes suggested that they were anxious to speed us on our way; past countless fishermen, mostly of the working class, who, this gay Sunday afternoon, sat smoking on the banks, each with a long rod and a basket of bait. Oh, river Thames, black and mud-like, what an odious comparison! So we drew near to Saint Cloud, the rapid little screw steamer gliding gracefully up

to the pier, where a long avenue of gold-leaved trees, touched already with their autumnal glory, made the scene one of exceeding freshness and delight.

On landing I strolled past the "Pavilion Bleu," a beautiful balconied café in two tiers, whence the strains of a string band proceeded agreeably enough. The place was all painted white and built in that light and graceful style of architecture which the French seem to understand so well, and which is as much an index to their playful and ease-loving character as the black and gloomy architecture of England is to the character of this great nation. I strolled through some charming public gardens, and up the great heights behind, whence one obtained a commanding view of the river and the surrounding country. These wooded inclines of Saint Cloud led towards a waterfall, where scenery was most picturesque. I returned by boat, The fishermen were still there by the river banks. As far as I could see they never caught anything at all, but this did not trouble them, and their occupation afforded them a delicious excuse for idleness.

One evening at dinner in the hotel I made the acquaintance of an Englishman who has lived there five years with his wife.

He gave us the history of the trouble he had had in attempting to oblige the officials with regard to the registration of his dog. So many obstacles had been put in his way by fussy and impertinent officials that he had retired from the fray disgusted, and there sat the dog to this day (he pointed to it in the courtyard), unregistered and unashamed. The system of exacting duty was also replete with annoyance. He had gone to the Gare Saint Lazare with an English friend to see him off to London, and as he happened to have with him a bottle of whiskey, which he had purchased that afternoon in Paris, he offered it to his friend, thinking he would enjoy it in the train or when he got back to England. His friend said, however: "Don't trouble; I shan't take it with me. I shall get some when I get home." Having seen the train start, our Englishman was about to depart from the station on his way home, when an official demanded of him where he got that bottle of whiskey. He explained that he had purchased it in Paris that afternoon. The official demanded payment of duty, unless our friend could produce the receipt from the wineshop. Of course he had none. It took half an hour to explain matters fully to the group of officials who surrounded him. At last he got away safe with the bottle.

I myself was the centre of an animated group of French

waiters in a restaurant for a different offence. I had gone in for a midday meal, thinking I had enough French coin, but when it came to paying I discovered, as I thought, that I had not. However, I offered the waiter half a crown in English money, and asked for three francs, out of which I would pay him. He took it to the manager of the establishment, who came and examined it as if it were some dangerous curiosity, and sent a waiter out to change it. He returned and offered me Fr.1.50 for it. I refused this and said I would go myself to any hotel, and the first Englishman I met would give me three francs for it. I offered to leave my umbrella as security. In due time they asked me how much French money I had got. I emptied it on the table. To my astonishment they assured me it was enough to pay the bill—95 centimes. I had had about three courses so it must have been a cheap house.

As I sit in the lofty room of my hotel in the Rue Jacob at night time I find myself fancying the hopes hat have lived and flourished and died in this quarter of Paris, where the student stalks with his enormous tie and baggy trousers, more often than not accompanied by his pet model.

Imagine the wild dreams of success which has sanctified these midnight streets—here Dumas wandered, his head full of wonderful stories, and his heart beating fit to break over some enchanting love affair.

How well these streets keep their secrets! They are like sphinxes, who know all and utter nothing.

On these long, winding stairs starving genius fell and knelt. This balcony was brushed by the skirts of beauty. These boulevards echoed to the shout of the revolutionist.

Talking of sphinxes reminds me. Coming up in the train from Boulogne were two typical honest Frenchwomen, who took out their knitting and crewel work, and pursued diligently for more than an hour this apparently fascinating and entirely harmless employment. So absorbed were they by their silent occupation that they paid little attention to the scenery, save when the train gathered speed and made sensational pace. Filled with speculation as to the city which we were approaching, I felt something almost uncanny in the silent and knowing attitude of these two Fates, who were accompanying me on my journey.

When first I saw my room on the top floor of the hotel, the manager lighted me up there with a candle. I was greatly struck by its Bohemian aspect. It was just the sort of room that I could have settled in in Paris and grown fond of. The pity of it is that its innocent-looking walls did not proclaim the fact that behind them lurked a host

of vermin. This was a whited sepulchre, indeed. The agreeable size of the room, its simple yet useful furniture, its cheerful outlook over the well-washed and irregular roofs, its large latticed windows, affording a sufficient glimpse of the summer sky; the small bed, partially enclosed in a glass alcove, none of these things suggested for one moment the actual and horrible discomfort of the wakeful nights which followed. True, the wall paper wore a suspicious appearance. Rent in places, it did not lie flat on the walls, but covered caverns wherein lurked the innumerable hosts of night. I suppose the majority of people have not really the courage to denounce the uncleanliness of such a room. They do an injustice thereby to those who visit it hereafter, and whose word is scarcely believed in consequence by the manager. He told me he had never had complaints before. It was not difficult for me to decide that people in the adjoining room to mine were undergoing the same painful experiences as I was myself. To crown injury with insult, Keating's Insect Powder is not even sold in Paris.*

An Agent de Police directed me to the Arc de Triomphe, which I was anxious to see by night. I was duly impressed by this tremendous axle of the wheel, whose spokes are formed by the great roads radiating from it in all directions, and which look especially radiant at night time.

It was at the Arc de Triomphe that a Frenchman explained to me, with much polite hand waving, how to take a "correspondence" ticket, so as to travel by several busses on one prepaid fare. His explanations were in vain. I could not find the ticket office, became impatient, and took my seat in a handy taximétre, in which I rolled away down the brightly lit avenue to Maxim's Café. This, however, presented a rather expensive appearance, and, like the rich man who was told to part with all his possessions, I went sorrowfully away.

I spent one evening at the Folies Bergére, paying three francs for a ticket for the promenade, and witnessing a very fine ballet, with a sensational climax such as would scarcely be allowed over here. It appeared that a Clown had fallen in love with a most beautiful creature, and was being helped on his way along the path of roses by a perfect bevy of ladies, who represented Cupid and fairies. The course of true love ran fairly smooth, and the curtain dropped none too quickly upon an inevitable bedroom scene.

Wanderers in the grand hall or promenade room of this

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*I did not then know Roberts' in the Rue de la Paix.

variety theatre are amused by the antics of visitors, who favour the slide which runs from the gallery into the hall below—a species of water-chute without the water, down which one may glide rapidly, alighting, it possible, on one's feet on the floor of the hall below, though not all gentlemen are so fortunate as to alight thus, some being quite sufficiently clumsy to get a nasty bump on the floor as a full stop to their rapid flight. Ladies do not favour this species of descent from the upper regions. Facilis descendus Averno; it may be dramatic, but it is too sudden.

The nuisance of this hall is that you aren't allowed to sit down in it without having a drink. As, unless you are fortunate, you have to stand up most of the time in order to watch the performance, one greatly resented this restriction, which is only to be avoided by calling for a succession of high-priced drinks.

I found a friend whom I had known in England. He lived in the Rue Quincampoix, a street whose pronounciation caused me some trouble at first. He was a German, but spoke English fluently. It was like coming out of a dark room into light, this discovery of somebody with whom one could converse in one's own native language after so much foreign clatter. I had lived with him in the same boarding-house in London. His place of business in Paris was close to the great Halles Centrales—the equivalent of our Covent Garden Market, but built on a much larger scale, a neighborhood of which Zola has discoursed so ably in his book, "The Fat and the Thin." I need not say that my German friend had very little good to say of the French.

Passing the Bourse one day, I went in, somewhat astonished that the strict rule against the entrance of strangers to our own London Stock Exchange does not apply in France. The noise was deafening. Perhaps the din in a foreign language seemed exaggerated. I presently found myself inside a ring which was apparently sacred to brokers only—very important-looking men—and I had to make the tour of this sacred circle as quickly as possible, as I was evidently an intruder.

Before leaving Paris I paid a visit to La Morgue (which in those days was open to the public) and found therein four inmates of the terrible glass compartment. One was an elderly lady, with a very white face and a black bonnet. She looked as though she had simply fallen asleep while doing her work, and one felt that she might at any moment arise and come to the glass window of the compartment and tap on it and tell us to go away and cease staring

at those who sleep: "Can't you let us rest in peace for half an hour?" she would say. It seemed a weird thing to fancy that one might lie there oneself, utterly unconscious of being the cynosure of all those curious eyes and oblivious of the remarks made by the crowd.

Another woman in there looked like a young Italian, with bronzed cheeks—such a woman as one might see selling fruit in the markets. Her head was turned to one side, resting sadly, yet peacefully, on her shoulder. She looked tired, yet a distinct smile rested on her features.

The next glass compartment, or refrigerator—down the outside of which streamed the moisture, owing to the extreme cold within—was occupied by a dead gardener. He had quarrelled with another gardener, and his forehead and one eye were bashed in by the blow of a spade. He was terribly disfigured by this clumsy weapon. The two had been working together in the fields and the man who attacked him had not been caught.

Notre Dame, close by, was somewhat of a disappointment to me; but I have no doubt that when a great service is in full swing one appreciates to the full the magnificence of this tremendous edifice.

My Friend, Mr. Robert Eberhardt, the American sculptor, related to me the other day an experience of his in the Cathedral of Notre Dame. He was visiting the Cathedral while a most gorgeous marriage service was being conducted. At the same time, in a small chapel in the background, the funeral services of a poor woman was being hurried through, and as the "Wedding March" struck up the coffin was got out of a side door as quickly as possible. The impression made upon him was such that he felt completely disgusted with the Catholic religion. It was not religion—it was business.

I had a glass of absinthe the night before I left Paris, but was not favourably impressed with the mingled taste of sweetness and peppermint.

I saw a pretty sight in the Jardins de Luxembourg. A Frenchman was feeding the sparrows, who, gathered together on the grass, by the seat where he sat, came one after another, flew on to the back of the seat and took the crumbs from between his fingers. Many people watched this pretty exhibition of confidence on the part of the Parisian sparrows.

I was quite enchanted with the pictures in the Luxembourg, and one piece of sculpture was alone worth the visit which I made. Inscribed "Pro Patrio," it simply represented a fallen youth, recumbent on the ground, his broken

sword clasped in one hand, and an angelic and satisfied smile on his face. In these galleries one is also glad to meet with Whistler's "Portrait of His Mother."

I spent a happy hour sketching the "Fontaine de Medicus," in the garden outside, where a gigantic Giant crouches above a rock, in a recess beneath which are sheltered two lovers, whom he espies, he himself holding out one huge hand as though to enforce silence on the part of spectators. Below, a long pool of water stretches, plentifully filled with playful goldfish, an endless source of amusement to the children who stray this way, and whose foreign prattle forms an agreeable accompaniment to the whispers of leaves and the murmuring of waters. Great trees in all the luxuriance of their summer foliage shade the sides of this delightful pool, the water running down toward it over a series of moss-grown steps. I think I should choose this spot out of any in Paris to sit by on a summer's day.

I was far from being inclined to leave Paris after a stay of only five days. Indeed, I established at the last moment, telegraphic communication with headquarters in London, and obtaining the necessary funds, gave myself a final day at Versailles. Then I tore myself away by the night train. I was extremely sleepy, and passed Boulogne station, finding myself at Calais half an hour or so later. I should have alighted at Boulogne, but the name of the station, "Boulogne-Tinterelle," puzzled me, and I thought we had to go yet a little further to get into the harbour. I misunderstood a porter whom I questioned, leaning out of the window. I was speedily convinced, however, by the lengthy run which the train then took, that I had overshot the mark. Not at all anxious to return home yet, I felt indifferent as to the consequences of this mistake, feeling sure that I should find myself when morning dawned at some equally fine city to that which I had just left. The lust of travel was upon me.

The next station I stepped out at was, however, Calais, and I came across by the Calais-Dover night boat, which was waiting, steam up, to depart. France seemed to be waving an heroic good-bye to me, with the great revolving arms of light which flashed across the sea from the Calais lighthouse, cutting the darkness of the night into sections with their knife-like rays.

We had a smooth crossing and at Dover were welcomed by a similar apparition of revolving beams of light from the Dover lighthouse.

The journey to London was a sleepy one, dawn suddenly lighting the landscape with a somewhat cold and weird effect before we had long left Dover.

I have no great liking for London now. I have left my heart behind me, in the long Rue de Rome, and I wish once again to whisper compliments in very bad French into the charming ear of "Etoile." As it was I did my best to tell her that she was an angel!

For many days I heard the siren-like call of Paris ringing in my ears: "Ne seras-tu de retour à cette Ville de Lumière?"

CHAPTER II.

SECOND VISIT TO PARIS.

I was mentioning the siren-like call. It haunted me for many a day after my return to London. And often, passing Charing Cross Station by chance, I would close my eyes and see again, in a vision of the mind, those flashing beacons of the coast, and dream that I was passing over the Channel, under a cloudy moon, which was soon to show me the white houses on the seafront of Boulogne.

I made a point of running down all English institutions and authorities, and before my friends I took a gloomy and disparaging view of London in particular and England in general, drawing all sorts of odious comparisons, invariably unfavourable to Great Britain, between the latter country and France. "Look at the mud of the London streets!" I would exclaim in wrathful accents. "Look at the black, sordid buildings, beside which the fairy-like architecture of Paris rises in an eternal attitude of superiority, if not scorn. Where," I would exclaim, with something of genuine regret, "are those happy faces, bathed in the sunshine that floods the Tuileries; those voices whose accents express so much gusto; that politeness, that spirit of fraternity, and all that good red wine of Bordeaux which I miss at home?"

Well, hankering thus after the cafés, if not the flesh-pots of Paris, I refused to pick up my wonted bearings in the English capital, which for ten years had been my favourite resting-place.

One night I passed up Chancery Lane. It was late, and I turned in at a small shop, in the windows of which were displayed a profusion of commonplace sweetmeats. One could here obtain hot sausages, coffee of a sort, or tea.

Two youngsters, one evidently English, the other—as I discovered later—a New Zealander, were seated at a clothless table and talking familiarly to the manager, who was a foreigner.

The coffee was very bad. It was composed of an essence, an artificial mixture, an arrant and chicory-like imitation. As I rose to leave I said to the manager: "This is not the

sort of coffee they give you in the Paris cafés"—a remark which was merely a sample from my large stock of phrases derogatory to the land of my birth.

"Hi, Mister!" said the New Zealander. And he wanted to know all about Paris. He, also, was of opinion that London was not by a long shot the first city in the world. So it came about that an acquaintance destined to be fraught with so momentous an experience sprang up between us.

The chance entry into a restaurant of a man carrying nothing more substantial or romantic than a tray of jam tarts accounted for Robert Louis Stevenson's "New Arabian Nights."

For the moment the young New Zealander rose, and, inviting me to accompany him and his friend, whispered a few words in an authoritative manner to the manager of the "restaurant," and left the shop without paying his bill. He had evidently come from some distant part of the globe.

Understanding shorthand and typewriting, he passed merrily from one office to the other in London, never staying anywhere longer than it pleased him, and carrying in his pocket the return half of a ticket to his home in New Zealand.

After having introduced me to his landlady, a kind, motherly-looking creature, he announced that he shortly expected his uncle, Valentine, who was crossing from Australia. It was Christmas time when this old gentleman appeared upon the scene. Although he owned a whole street in Christchurch, New Zealand, he just took a humble fourth-floor room alongside of his nephew, and as soon as I was introduced to him he said, pointing round the room:

"I'm a plain man, and this is good enough for me."

I gazed at him reflectively and said: "Would you like to pay a few days' visit to Paris? I have a week's holiday myself."

"How much will it cost?" he replied.

I gave him a very low estimate, and at last it was fixed that we should start, I acting as his guide and interpreter. The young New Zealander said to me:

"I shall stay back here. But my uncle Valentine has plenty of money. Make him go. He can't speak a word of French, but you can. Therefore, you must accompany him."

The following day being Christmas Day, all the banks were closed, but the old gentleman went out to some rich friends in the suburbs and got some money for Paris. Valentine and I then left this suburban villa (which was decorated throughout with holly and evergreens, the draw-

ing-room table being covered with costly presents), and were ready to start.

On Boxing Day, however, much to my disgust, he spent all this money in London.

Another day was fixed for our departure; but at the critical moment Mr. Valentine fell ill. However, we started at last. And thus it is that I find the following note in my diary:

"Went to Paris rather late in the day with a sick New Zealander, who had eaten some onions which had disagreed with him."

I soon found that economy was his strong point, especially when in a foreign country. He had been dining in the cheapest Italian restaurants he could find in the Soho and King's Cross quarters, where sausages and onions occupy an important portion of the menu. Hence his indisposition.

We got across the Channel quite smoothly, and on arriving in Paris fell by mistake into a magnificent hotel, the address of which had been given to Uncle Valentine by a foreign waiter in a Soho restaurant. The waiter said to him; "Sir, if you want a cheap little hotel, go to the Saint James and Albany."

When we drove up it was late at night. The taximétre entered a magnificent courtyard and a liveried servant sprang down some broad marble steps to meet us. The front doors of a vast hotel had opened as if by magic, and a blaze of light illuminated the somewhat cadaverous cheeks of old Valentine, as he stared around him saying:

"This is no cheap hotel. Where are we?"

"However, we arranged with the manager at six francs a night per room. He seemed amused at our mistake, and said he was giving us specially reasonable terms.

As for Mr. Valentine, he lit his pipe, picked up a piece of string that he found lying on the hall floor, and went quietly to bed with it. I found out later that he was a miser.

I had had the greatest difficulty in persuading him to come to Paris. He had pleaded first want of cash, next, the stomachic indisposition consequent upon the surfeit of decayed onions at a cheap restaurant. And now here he was landed in one of the most fashionable hotels of Paris. The Duke of Norfolk stopped here only last week.

This J. Valentine is a strange freak of a creature, fond of his money, but a little gone on religion. He always carries about with him a small box, the contents of which he describes a "lollies." Thus he gave the manager of this

great hotel, just before we came upstairs, a gelatine sweetmeat. "Take a lolly?" he said.

I next day discovered that he had a large stock of them. He gave hundreds away in Paris, as a small return for anyone who did us a service. Sometimes I was obliged, when we were sight-seeing, to ask the way of gentlemen who as often as not were intelligent and decorated. The astonishment of these polite Parisians was as great as my chagrin when he inevitably terminated the conversation by: "Take a lolly?" proffering at the same time his ridiculous box of sweetmeats. Some gazed at the contents in a doubtful and perplexed fashion, but took one, nevertheless out of politeness. Others shook their heads sorrowfully, and went away without accepting.

Their refusal did not touch this hard-skinned old New Zealander. He continued his occupation of picking up dozens of pins and yards of string in the streets of Paris, and perhaps here and there a scrap of the language.

He could never pass a pin that lay on the pavement without having pity upon it. The smallest piece of loose string straying on the boulevards was precious in his eyes and he rescued it from oblivion and put it in his pocket. When not thus occupied he was examining the interiors of churches.

On one occasion I got him to go into the Opera House. But we sat so far up in the roof that, although we heard music we saw nothing. This was his idea of economy. As I was paying my own expenses all the way on this trip I went down after growling aloud for some time and tipped a white-capped woman who stood on guard at a little door and was permitted to occupy a box, the rightful owners of which had not turned up. From this box I had an excellent view of the stage.

The vast orchestra, held under perfect control, opened with astonishing éclat, each stringed instrument gradually contributing its iota to the full flood of music. It was as though a huge organ were being manipulated by a single hand, the stops one by one released giving effect to a majestic flow of harmany which accorded well with the stately action of the old Biblical story, "Samson and Delilah."

Valentine said afterwards:

"There's a place near here where you can get coffee for a penny."

The next day Mariette came to see me at the Hotel Saint James, Rue Saint Honoré. Since my return to England we had kept up a correspondence, and she had indicated to me an address in the Rue de Rome, where my letters would

always reach her. This was a Teinturerie and Blanchisserie combined. Madame Grin here presided over many nice girls with spotless white aprons, and piles of clean linen, smelling deliciously fresh, steamed on wooden tables. Madame Grin forwarded my letters to this charming Mariette, I have always since felt an affection for Blanchisserie establishments, and as soon as I could escape from Uncle Valentine, I went to see Madame Grin.

Well, Mariette called in due course to see me at the hotel—but none told me how she looked, nor what she said. I caught no flavour of her trailing skirts. I heard no rustle of her coloured satins. No leaf fell from her bouquet—not a petal of the scarlet geranium, not a pearl-like bell of the lily-of-the-valley. Perhaps she may never even read these words. She passed, like dawn's grey-golden clouds of glory, which fade into new shapes, even as the memory strives to capture them, leaving no solace to the watcher save a ghostly gallery stored with pictures of the imagination.

She waited for me for two hours.

I was out in the street, being misdirected, riding in the wrong omnibuses, and paying excess fares. I might at that moment have been kneeling at her feet, while she translated to me all the poetry of France in one love-laden sigh!

No, I was down the other end of the Rue de Rome, talking to Madame Grin, who used to pass my letters to her.

"Why!" said Madame Grin, "it is to-day, not to-morrow that she comes to see you!"

Oh, horror—a hasty glance at a French postmark. "Demain"—reads her letter, "I shall be passing your hotel and will look in." "Demain!" But to-morrow has come. It is an error in reading the postmark, which has convinced me that she means Sunday—not Saturday.

All that beauty is lost. For this alone I crossed the Channel, pawning my gold chain, rushing in the face of Prudence.

Oh, Red and Yellow of Despair—Hell's angels flash me the sudden signals. My heart beats like the engine of a 100-h.p. Panhard. What a sweet mockery. To the Batignolles—to the Batignolles! It may be that I shall reach the hotel before she leaves it. I do not. Fate again interposes with an oily finger and a grim, Saturnine smile. I am misdirected. Hark—a chorus of confused voices seems to hum in my ear! Rue Saint Honoré! Through the courtyard. The great glass hall, with its ferns and palms, and

dainty basket-work chairs and tables, is empty. She is not there.

A bearded man in livery looks gravely, if not sarcastically, at me from behind the raised bureau:

"A letter for you, sir. A lady has waited for more than two hours."

Hell's torment! The heavens rain white-hot arrows into my furious heart. Look at the postmark!

Yet I dread to open the letter which she has left. It is in French. It is easy to read. Two sentences out of a dozen fly before my eyes like chariots which race to death:

"Waited two hours. Ce n'est pas gentil."

"If you deign," the letter continues (I deign?) "to reply to this letter, say that you will meet me to-morrow, at two hours."

To-morrow comes. I have written meanwhile to say that I shall wait not only till two hours, but until I see her.

The table shakes while I write the letter. The lantern-jawed New Zealander, dressed like a cheap tripper, complains to me that the table is shaking. I scarcely hear his common accents. I scarcely see his little weazel-like face. The shrivelled creases on his brow betoken a miser. The cautious eyes. Great God, this is all a repetition. I remember once before when I dared to love a woman that a lean ungodly old reprobate got mixed up in it, and confused me. . . . . .

. . . . . .

Yes, yes; what was I saying—thank you! Again the cold sponge. That was most refreshing. Ah, yes, a gay city, Paris! Une belle ville!

I forgot—I was telling you how I wrote confirming the fresh appointment—the letter than made the table shake so much.

Yes—it fell into her husband's hands.

Just my luck.

It was New Year's Eve the next day. I remember it, for the following day I sailed for England.

And Mariette died—I tell you she died—for I have never heard of her since.

Before I and the New Zealander—who said he thought things had passed off fairly well in Paris—returned by the night train to London, I had occasion to call up at the offices of the "Daily Mail" in Paris, which were then situated in the Place de la Madeleine. The editor in charge, to whom I sent in my card, confided to me that he had need of an expert shorthand writer to take down two calls nightly on

the telephone, news being thus dictated from the London office in Carmelite House, for publication in the Continental edition.

"I said: "Yes, if you can give me three pounds a week and seven days to store my things in London, we'll call it a deal."

There was nothing signed on paper, but a week later, having in the interval crossed the Channel, deposited the New Zealander at the house of his nephew in London, and stored my goods, I presented myself at Place de la Madeleine and took up my duties.

I find in my diary: "Hang this awful telephone across the Channel. In this stormy winter weather when the winds do blow, the cables shiver under the sea, and the ocean bed is rocked, and one heards strange murmurings mixed with the monotonous voice of Hamilton, who is speaking from the "Daily Mail" offices in Carmelite Street, London:

"In the Divorce Court to-day"—bubble-bubble-bubble—"Mrs. Jack Shoebury"—bubble-bubble—"Mr. John Horseferry was the co-respondent. The servant said—Mr. Justice—granted a decree nisi."

Fill in the gaps with bubble-bubble, and there you have a complete Law Court case as I hear it over the telephone in Paris, plus the interference of winds and waves.

Awfully amusing, isn't it, when you're getting a salary of Frs.40 a week, instead of the Frs. 75.00 which was promised.

Still, I might be happy in Paris, perhaps. But I must work at my drawing.

January 16, 1906.

(My first visit to Monsieur Luc-Olivier Merson, Membre de l'Institut, Grand Officier de la Légion d'Honneur, one of the Professors of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts.)

That was a real studio. And how excellently he spoke French.

When I rang the Bohemian-looking cord that hung at the door of the "deuxième étage," I heard the bark of a dog within. Then the door opened and a large grave man, like Cyclops, stood before me, framed in a mysterious darkness. Entrez!

I stood a moment at the threshold of the vast studio. He bowed. "Entrez" he repeated.

Monsieur Merson, of Rue Denfert Rochereau. A huge darkened room. A stove. A lamp on the table. Shadows. Silence. We chatted of England, which he had never visited. It was a charming half-hour.

He looked at my sketches and approved some. Gave me his card, with the name of his atelier written thereon. I learnt afterwards that his name is known throughout Paris. I stood in the presence of one of those poets whose fingers trace upon the canvas a story delicate and entrancing as the voice of a woman. This rugged exterior—these weighty and measured steps—impress one with a sense of power. Here is a presence which impels respect; for behind this screen of courteous reserve lies the knowledge of what is truth in Art—lies Art itself, in all its dazzling and wondrous variations.

Here in this tranquil studio, amid so many venerable tomes and graceful paintings, a spiritual voice seems to breathe its message of counsel and warning. This voice cannot be heard out amid the noise of actual life. It tells me that now is the day of opportunity, and that soon the Night cometh, in which no man can work.

I shall not soon forget this great studio, with its lofty easels, the tops of which were lost in the darkness of the large chamber.

I left him with his kindly "au revoir" echoing in my ears.

CHAPTER III.

L'ECOLE DES BEAUX-ARTS.

The Gates of Paradise.

Hark, in this quiet square a trilling note! One stands alone in great shadows, but the sunlight strikes up yonder on the blue wall—and a flash of radiant spring foliage—soft, faint green against red-grey stones, trembles up there above us.

This is the courtyard of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. How quiet, how seemly everything is. We might well be standing in the courtyard of a country inn. The roaring of Paris has gone out of our ears. Here a crouching faun, there a dancing nymph assume exquisite attitudes, and seem, all stone though they are, to be on the point of speaking to one. But the note of the bird aforementioned is all that one hears. Up these well-worn staircases, bounded by walls scribbled all over with the names of art students, we climb to the class-rooms, now deserted, for it is a Saint's Day. Some bread-crumbs lie about and a pile of ashes of paper, doubtless some burnt-out torch with which a harum-scarum Bohemian lit his or a friend's cigarette, incidentally singeing his moustache off in the act.

Inside the Doors.

I am an old bird, not lightly to be caught, and I came down joyfully, under the warm sun, from the heights where the lovely Church of Sacré Cœur sends the white oval of its dome high into the blue sky, with many a glittering pinnacle of snow-white stone; and away into the roaring traffic of the great boulevards, and so across the river to the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. With the ripened experience of an old student of Westminster Art School, and later of St. Martin's, in Long Acre, I had certainly expected some sort of supervision in a class composed mostly of raw youngsters, many of whom have not yet learnt to take anything seriously, even their favourite Art.

But I soon found, on looking into the atelier, that what work one wished to do there must be done amid a jumble

and confusion of noise—call it the exuberance of youthful spirits if you will—which makes serious study a practical impossibility. This is the first Art "School" (sic) of Paris. True the school is visited twice in a week by M. Luc-Olivier Merson, the master of that particular atelier where I was to work. The students had been busy scribbling on the wall a set of satirical verses regarding his teaching, under the title of "The Commandments of Saint Luc." He happened to be there when I arrived, and I was formally introduced to him, which was unnecessary, seeing that I had met him several times before in his private atelier. A charming and witty Frenchman, his presence always commands a respectful silence. But immediately he left the room a storm and tumult of noise broke out. Some seemed to imitate the uproarious trumpeting of the elephant, another student hailed down upon us from a ladder the gallant crownings of a chanticleer, while shreds and scraps of songs rent the air in every direction.

The tumult never seemed to die out entirely. It appeared to constitute the normal state of the school, and has already in my experience lasted three or four days without cessation. In fact, I began to believe that each student was rather afraid of making less noise than his neighbour, and felt it his duty, on pain perhaps of expulsion from this "School of Art," to emulate his fellows in making more weird cat-calls than the rest.

This is a very youthful system of terrorisation. And having paid my forty francs entrance fee to the massier—my contribution towards the general fund for maintenance and upkeep of the atelier—and then, at the unanimous summons of the whole school, led the way to the adjoining tabac, and stood some forty bocks and other drinks, as a sort of footing, I felt that I was quite entitled to reply, when some jovial student required of me the next day, while the model was sitting, a song (even if it were only "God Save the King," he naively suggested) that, apart from the difficulty which has ever, since the days of the Psalmist, attached to the singing of songs by a stranger in a foreign land, I had not come to the School of Art to learn singing, but to learn drawing. "Je ne suis pas ici dans le but d'apprendre à chanter; mais je commence à croire que ceci est peut-être un école de chantage."

But it was ever thus, I trow. Every possible obstacle is placed in the light of a student, when he endeavors seriously to acquire some knowledge that will stand him in good stead in the future. That is why we see these idle and noisy students cutting such a bad figure when their

student days are finished, and when they have entered into the real struggles of life. They are then forced to regard Art seriously, when it is too late.

As far as I can learn, many of them are entirely idle when the school closes at eleven o'clock a.m. For the rest of the day they must loaf about in the Latin Quarter, annoying the little working girls, who run before them bareheaded in the streets. They do not know what real work is. The hours of the school are in the summer 7 a.m. till 11.30 a.m. After that I go to my office and work, and they wonder how it is that I have more money than they have, and can afford to drive down to the school in the morning in a taximétre!

. . . . . .

One of the students of the above-mentioned National School of Art took me this morning, after the class had risen, to the "Académie Julian," in the Rue de Dragon. Here all was quiet and decorous. There was plenty of room, plenty of light, and plenty of beautiful and some very valuable paintings left on the walls by former students, many of whom have since set their mark high on the roll of Fame.

. . . . . .

There is no silence more eloquent than that which pervades the cloisters of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts during the Long Vacation.

Amidst the various whispers of the old trees, the falls of the fountain in the courtyard, and the songs of birds who haunt this artistic quarter, there is one thing wanting—the joyous voice of the students. They are scattered throughout Normandy, Brittany, and the Southern Provinces. Likewise their professors.

Monsieur Luc-Olivier Merson, Professor of our own atelier, has gone down to his château in Brittany, and is sitting under the trees in the vast garden of the "Château du Fransic, par Morlais, Finistère," where he divides his time between fishing in the river and sketching delicate outlines of wild flowers and tangled foliage, to serve later on as valuable "documents" in decorative work. An old "Prix de Rome" man, his criticisms are always severe, but this must be expected from so formidable a master of the Decorative Arts as Monsieur Merson, whose principal work adorns the Foyer of the Opéra Comique and the halls of the Hotel de Ville.

I shall not find M. Jean Veber in town. The favourite caricaturist of Parisians is included in the general exodus,

though he has not gone so far afield for his holiday as some. He has taken his family only to Chaudry par Monsoult, a quiet village in the Department of the Seine and Oise, and here, although holiday-making, his ever watchful eye is sure to note something humorous which will come at the proper time before the eye of the public.

. . . . . .

Tiens! there goes Paltz, shuffling through the Cour de Murier with a canvas under his arm. I must ask him what he is doing in town at this season of the year.

. . . . . .

Paltz, whose head is as full of history as the Bibliothéque Nationale, says that I am to give you the following details, for which he will make no extra charge:

"On the site now occupied by the Ecole des Beaux-Arts of Paris, there once stood the Convent of the Petits Augustins, founded in 1613 by Marguerite of Valois, the first wife of Henri Quartre. In the year 1790 this Convent became national property, and was used as a museum, wherein were collected and safeguarded from the fury of the Revolutionists, rare and valuable works of sculpture in wood and marble which, if left standing in the churches, were at that time hacked to pieces by the apostles of vandalism. Thus we learn (from the infallible Paltz) that the Revolutionary Committees actually issued an order in 1793 for the burning in a public place of four hundred and ninety priceless oil paintings of noblemen, princes, and prelates.

"The architect, Alexander Lenoir, secured from destruction at this period, and concealed under the arched vaults of the Convent of the Petits Augustins, a vast collection of art treasures—statues, ancient doorways, historical tombstones, in the crevices of which latter (if we are to trust the word of Paltz) still lay the dust of kings.

"In 1815 this museum became a School of Fine Arts. In 1819 the actual buildings of the present school were begun.

"Let us conclude our tour by a visit to the tranquil cloisters of the Ecole, which are called the "Cour du Mûrier.' Here some Parisian sparrows are disporting themselves in the circular marble basin where the sparkling waters of the fountain fall musically.

"In one angle of these cloisters stands the statue of Henri Regnault, an angel offering him a laurel leaf. This monument was erected by the students in honour of the young artist, who fell fighting for France in the year 1871."

CHAPTER IV.

HOW TO ENTER THE ECOLE DES BEAUX-ARTS.

With the advent of the autumn term, some hints may not come amiss as to the steps which English and American students may take to obtain admittance into what is generally recognised as the first Art School in the world.

The author of this book, on his arrival in Paris, was sauntering through the Louvre one day, when he asked this very question of a French artist who was copying Murillo's "Le Jeune Mendicant." This artist at once gave the private address of his old master, Monsieur Luc-Olivier Merson. A visit to this latter gentleman, whose courteous reception in his fine private studio near the Luxembourg Gardens was the commencement of a lasting frinedship, resulted in the necessary letter of introduction to the Massier of M. Merson's atelier in the Ecole des Beaux-Arts.

First, however, it was necessary to call at the British Embassy and present a certificate of birth, which was easily obtainable for a fee of three shillings and sixpence from Somerset House, London. This certificate set forth, above an official signature, your age, parentage, nationality, and place of birth.

The Ambassador's secretary glanced at the document and forthwith gave the English aspirant to artistic honours the necessary paper for presentation in the Bureau of the Ecole. This paper took the form of a signed official letter bearing the Embassy stamp, and contained a polite request to the French authorities that they should favourably consider this application for entrance. Armed with this document and M. Merson's letter of introduction, I went to the bureau of the School on the Quai Malaquais, and was duly entered on the books as a student, free to work in the ateliers and receive instruction from the greatest masters of their art at no cost whatever to myself—beyond bare materials and the initial fee of Fr.40—till I reached the age of thirty.

At the cost of perhaps Fr.25 for drinks all round, the

thirty students of your atelier must be "treated" in a neighbouring café, and a fine, uproarious meeting this is. Work is abandoned, easels and stools fall to the ground in the hurried rush of the stampede, the air model throws a cloak round her gracious form and, giving her arm to a favourite, is escorted in triumph to the café chosen by the atelier, where hot coffee, Dubonnets, vin blancs, and other beverages are the order of the moment.

On the way back through the streets, many a pretty grisette falls a prey to the caprices of this merry crowd, is enticed into the procession, and even has to submit to a few kisses.

With these preliminary remarks, let us give a rough sketch of the arrangements, curriculum and characteristics of the school itself.

*The Ecole des Beaux-Arts ranks highest amongst all the important Schools of Art of Paris, and is the richest in historical relics, architectural beauty, and artistic associations.

No opportunity has been missed to stimulate the artistic taste of its pupils. Here, for more than a century, have been colleced and gathered together the most beautiful monuments of ancient France, a vast accumulation of plaster casts, of statues belonging to all epochs; copies, patiently collected, of the most renowned pictures of Europe, documents of every description susceptible of bringing artistic instruction to the young artist, and this collection forms a tout ensemble unique in the world.

There is no school to which access is so facile to strangers, nor where the course of study is so freely enjoyed. The consent of the Chef d'Atelier once obtained, the young man who wishes to become a painter, sculptor, artist, or engraver, enters absolutely free into the ateliers, where for many years he will be afforded the most expert instruction, and where living models pose for him each week.

The professors are chosen from amongst the most celebrated masters of their period. The young foreigner will easily be able to choose, according to his tastes already awakened, the atelier which he ought to seek to enter. He will pass under the doorway of M. Cormon if he favours a bold, untrammelled and luxuriant style of painting, and subjects full of a sturdy and truculent composition. He will commit his future to the sagacity of M. Luc-Olivier Merson, if a sensitive taste leads him to pursue a more delicate and fanciful style.

M. Ferrier teaches, in the third atelier, a precise style of

his own, which tends with so much success towards the delineation of the most seductive forms of beauty.

The fourth atelier is reserved for women. It is under the direction of M. Humbert, the elegancy of whose art is sufficiently well known.

The sculptors have at their disposition just as many ateliers. There is not a school which has contributed more to spread to foreigners the pure and classic style of France. No American or other foreign artist has been able properly to complete the course of his art studies if he has not passed some of his time in the Ecole of the Rue Bonaparte. One can learn mathematics, mechanics, or chemistry in Germany or Switzerland; the art of war in the campaigns of other nations, and commerce in England or America. But to become a good painter one must study in Paris.

As to architecture, it may fairly be said that most of the greatest American architects have passed through the Ecole des Beaux-Arts.

Moreover, the Ecole is gradually expanding its influence in many directions. There is no nationality which does not find its representative among the students. The atelier Cormon counts amongst its members three Japanese.

The course of instruction is divided into weeks—that is to say, each atelier keeps the same model for one entire week. Each month the pose is taken during one week by a female model.

The ateliers of painting and sculpture are only open in the morning. The chef of the atelier comes to criticise twice a week. The afternoons are devoted to classes and examinations of all kinds, for which entrance is optional—there are lectures on anatomy, with the living model and the dead model; courses of archæology, perspective, chemistry, history, and literature—for a painter should be well-read both in modern and classical history. All this instruction, profound and complete as it is, is absolutely gratuitous.

The Gaiety of the Pupils.

The gaiety of the pupils of the Beaux-Arts is proverbial. It is due, firstly, to the nature of the studies, which require, more than any other form of creative art, liberty of thought, It is also due to the youthfulness of the students, who are admitted up to the age of thirty only.

Each atelier is administered by a massier, chosen by election among the students. He is charged with the administration of his atelier and is the arbitrator in any disputes.

Monday is always an extremely picturesque day. This is

the day when the models present themselves to be elected by the atelier for a sitting and retained in advance. Troops of male and femals models pay visits from one atelier to another, seeking "des semaines," as they term their weekly engagements. These models are for the most part Italians, with copper-coloured skin, black and amber-coloured hair, and deep, unfathomable eyes. However free and unrestrained may be the preliminary chaff engendered of necessity by the presence of so many young unruly people and the liberty of the spectacle, this is always a minute of delicate emotion. It is the hour for the choice of a female model. The candidates, speedily prepared, present themselves, often blushing, to the examination of all these young men. The universal attention inspires almost always a minute of respectful silence—even supposing the "subject," as often happens, is little worthy of admiration. For after all, we are in the world of artists, for whom the nude is sacred. The atelier votes for the model of their choice by a show of hands.

Reception of a New Student.

The reception of a new student is a very curious ceremony. We find ourselves amongst an assembly the traditions of which have been handed down from generation to generation.

A new pupil, on his entry to this school, has his entire personality put to the test, and can conceal nothing. The "anciens," or senior pupils, examine him with severity, and if they judge him defective, either in colour or form, they "retouch" him and put in a few "accents" here and there with brush strokes. If he is too pale, a little vermilion gives him a "bonne mine." Or, if he is too red, his looks are improved in the other direction and he is made paler. Then, in order to guard against losing him entirely, he is "stamped" at the students' leisure, with an iron punch or die, which bears the initials of the atelier, and which, heated to a white heat, serves to mark the easels and stools. This die, cleverly painted, possesses happily only the aspect of having come out of the fire—but the illusion is complete.

The new pupil must sing, dance a jig if he is an American, and climb up to the cornice of the room, whilst his new companions drink or smoke to his health.

But all of a sudden the Inspector is announced. All the atelier immediately settles down to work. The unhappy new pupil finds himself at once abandoned, and moreover in a most painful condition as regards apparel. To the interrogatories of this Inspector, the massier, acting as the

authorised spokesman, replies that the new pupil has tried, in spite of all the efforts of his comrades, to divest himself of his clothes, and that he never ceases to sing and dance, according to the customs of his country. One can judge into what a rage the Inspector flies. "Where do you come from—Hey? In what country are such customs practised? Where is your family? I will await you presently in my office, where I will notify you of the punishment you merit!"

This Inspector is not alone. He is accompanied by one or two high functionaries. These gentlemen are attired in frock coats and tall silk hats, and are decorated. Carrying portfolios under their arms, they make a formidable impression. It does not enter into the head of the unhappy new pupil that all this is false, and that the real Inspector —whom he will presently go in search for, very uneasy as to what awaits him—will unveil to him with kindliness the malice of his comrades.

This malice is inexhaustible. Things are cited which appear incredible, and which are, however, historic. For instance, in an atelier of architecture which is situated on the ground floor, the new pupils were employed in hollowing out a so-called "well," in search of hidden treasure. The floor of the room had been carefully removed over a certain space, and the well was hollowed to a depth of three metres—nine feet—before the Administration had learnt of the fact.

Sometimes the school overflows outside its boundaries, and the Quarter Bonaparte is accustomed to bizarre and noisy extravagancies. The police shut their eyes, for they know that this is only the natural superabundance of youthful spirits, which finds satisfaction in this way.

Once, however, the school surpassed itself. It was at that epoch when Paris was in a fever, for and against General Boulanger. One of the ateliers of the Ecole had just received a new pupil who somewhat resembled the General. The likeness was sufficiently close to inspire his comrades with a great idea. A general's uniform was quickly found, the student was thrown in this guise on a great plank seized from the architectural department, and the procession set out in triumph through the streets of Paris, towards the Hotel du Louvre, where the real General was stopping. This time the musicians of the architectural atelier formed part of the procession. The astonished cockneys of Paris did not know what to make of the scene. Great numbers of the populace mistook him for the real General and turned the manifestation into some-

thing very nearly approaching a riot. At the end of an hour of uproarious promenade, during which time this troop of students had by degrees been augmented by less sympathetic elements of the populace, it was none too early to retire behind the strong gateways of the old school.*

Another incident within the memory of many of the present students in our own atelier is worth describing. I got it from Gillot the other night, when we were dining together in the Monasterial Hotel.

It appears that in those times the new student came in for more practical jokes than nowadays, and one new arrival had his hat stolen and hidden. He came up next day without a hat, and so on all through the week. When questioned as to why he did not buy another hat, he said he had no money.

Presently the whole atelier of thirty or forty students rose as one man and went out together They made their way to "La Belle Jardinière," one of the enormous Parisian Magazins, where one can buy anything at fairly popular prices. Here they invaded the establishment. Stern managers, icy under-managers, and grave shop-walkers looked askance as the entire atelier, forming procession, started marching round the huge building, exploring everywhere, up stairs and down, chatting unconcernedly with the young girl employées who were serving customers, and even kissing these pretty maids, and singing choruses at the tops of their voices. In fact, they carried on just as they were accustomed to do in and out of the atelier, whenever they mustered their forces.

The managers of the great haberdashery and other departments frowned and stamped. 'Twas all in vain. Under pretext of searching the building to find a suitable hat for their comrade, the atelier made the roof ring with riotous song and mocking speeches, the latter delivered from every point of vantage in the lofty galleries.

At their wits' end, the management sent for the police. But even then it took two or three hours to rid the building of these lively young invaders, who were asking the shop girls if they found their work not too hard, or if they had any complaints to make, for now was the time to make them!

At last the hat was chosen, and then forty unruly students insisted upon passing one after the other before the "cassie," or cash desk, and paying each his contribution

* M. Jean Veber, the great caricaturist and painter, who passed his youth studying in the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, related this incident to me.

towards the price of the hat—that is to say, two or three sous apiece.

At last, in their own good time, the atelier, having bought and paid for the hat, moved off in a body chaffing right and left and singing their uproarious songs for all the world to hear!

It is difficult to convey a just idea of the "atmosphere" of the atelier Merson. The accompanying photograph is not, however, without value. Here we see the atelier itself, with the model posing—hiding her face demurely, because she does not wish to be recognised in the photo. Behind her, to the right, standing aloft, is the dark and sombre figure of Boissart, the massier, in his shirt sleeves. The window of the atelier, which gives on the beautiful gardens of the Director of the School, is open, but unfortunately a mirthful student in the background is holding up a large canvas, on which is painted the portrait of our Professor, Monsieur Luc-Olivier Merson. This canvas, though it may be an excellent portrait, unfortunately obscures the charming gardens.

To the left of the model kindly observe the unblushing and benign countenance of our dear Professor. His hair is white, his expression is full of humour, and his wrinkled forehead hides a store of knowledge.

You should certainly visit the atelier. You would probably be welcomed with some flying missiles; an open box of soft soap such as we use for cleaning our brushes might be flung with great force, and, smashing on the wall above your head, would spray your spotless "complet" with a putty-like mixture, so that your own tailor would not know you. After being invited in a loud voice by the whole atelier to "fouter à poil!" you would probably be spared that painful operation on the condition that you stood drinks to the atelier, which yould would hasten to do.

The raucous cries of these young and ardent savages, who seemed a moment earlier to be thirsting for your blood, and one of whom was crying in an authoritative voice: "Faites chauffer les fers!" ("Heat the torture irons") would then be changed into a more dulcet chorus, and, heigho! for the nearest café.

CHAPTER V.

THE BAL DE QUAT'Z ARTS.

The Bal de Qut'z Arts is an annual fête got up by the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. Students buy their tickets in the atelier to which they belong, for five francs each, on the morning of the Fête. These are sold by the massier, who is seated in state at an impromptu desk generally made of soap boxes or empty packing-cases. He gives no credit.

Each students receives in exchange for five francs a large entrance card, in the form of a brilliant design, on which is pictured the frincipal features of the ball. The student also receives, if he asks for it, a smaller card, with very elegant illuminated design, which enables him to conduct any lady of his choice to the ball, provided she is pretty. He generally chooses a model.

This year, 1907, costume of the period described as "Les Guérres Mediques, Entrée de Xerxes Dans Athens," was de rigueur. Admission was strictly refused to those arriving without this costume, even though they possessed entrance cards.

The ball had been previously advertised in huge red posters* displayed in each of the ateliers. These printed documents were remarkable compositions. Compiled by the joint efforts of the massiers of the various ateliers, they abounded with the slang of the student. They announced, incidentally, that the ball was to take place in the Salle de l'Hippodrome, Boulevard de Clichy, Montmartre.

I had a magnificent robe of many colours, with a red manteau, and was very uncomfortable.

The obtaining of this costume was a frightful nuisance. In company with a French student called Paltz, I visited a couturier's in the Rue Faubourg Montmartre. The place was packed with students and models. Paltz, who has never got a sou, but has abundant red locks, sometimes poses as a model in our atelier, so as to gain a little money to go on with, when he has not sold many pictures. He is married, and lives on the heights of Montmartre. He and I had had a long wrangle with Boissart, the massier, that

* Specimen poster is quoted in French at the end of this chapter.

morning. We tried to persuade him to let us have our entrance tickets on credit till the end of the month. But the massier was very "rosse," or inflexible, and we had to raise cash.

My "copin," the long-locked Paltz, being obliged to study economy, had used as costume his bed-blankets, fashioning out of them a remarkable toga. Some antimacassars taken from the backs of the chairs of his concierge's sitting-room added éclat to his costume, and thus arrayed he gaily descended with me from the heights of Montmartre when evening fell. He was supremely indifferent to the curiosity of the crowd, who stared at him in the streets and on the Metro, through which we passed on our way to the Hippodrome.

The cafés in the neighbourhood of this hall were overflowing on Wednesday night, June 9, at eight o'clock, with students stained a dark colour, who looked more like Red Indians than ancient Greeks, with marvellous headgear and less costume than the Scottish Highlanders, who entered the café brandishing a six-foot spear, with a wild warwhoop, and took a bock, previous to going in with the rest of their atelier to the hall where the dance was. Parisians were very much amused—those who happened to be seated in the said cafés—and they regard student life as a species of madness, which it sometimes is.

Although costumes were "de rigueur," it happened that long before the clocks struck midnight the female contingent of this riotous assembly had dispensed, for the most part, with every vestige of garment. Some, indeed, had not far to go to arrive at this stage, as, after taking their cloaks off in the vestibule of the hall, they appeared clad only in the thinnest of gauze veils, which they either discarded of their own free will after the first "stirrup-cup" of champagne, or lost as they pressed through the dense throngs of dancing Grecian heroes, who waylaid their every step. One girl of great beauty bore upon her dazzling white shoulder a rose-red scar, which she had won in the hand-to-hand grapple with some ardent satyr.

The floor of the vast hall was quickly invaded by hosts of Grecian warriors and their fair companions. Cors de chasse made the air ring with their deafening strains. The ears were stunned by the clamour of the paid orchestra, competing with the shouts of students and the echoing clash of cymbals.

On two sides of the hall extended for its full length a lofty gallery, in front of which were fitted up the "loges," or private boxes, belonging to each of the different ateliers. These

were reached by numerous staircases. Weird and extravagant goblins made of wood or cardboard, with movable mouths an tails, leered and gibbered down upon the tumultuous throng from the front of these "loges." It was in these curtained boxes that, notwithstanding the din of orchestral competition, lovers found shadowy corners wherein to whisper once again their vows.

Early in the evening a gorgeous procession of decorative cars made the round of the vast hall. Each atelier contributed its allegorical car, or "float," illustrating some aspect of Grecian history. The Architectural students of the Ecole had naturally prepared the most splendid of these enormous cars, a Greek temple, which was decorated with birds and beasts of heroic size. Pray regard, perched upon the summit of one of them, and far above the crowd, this nude and angelic-looking girl, who stands high and fearless on that dizzy height, the while weird creatures, whose limbs are all wound about with red-and-gilt trappings, and whose faces are blacked like devils, push the great car slowly round the dense-packed hall, beating the while their deafening brass or tin-ware cymbals, and shrieking a wild war dance.

Some Agents de Police are hugely enjoying the spectacle from their vantage points in the gallery, but as they have never been known to interfere with anything that takes place, and as their sole chance of safety consists in sitting perfectly quiet and smiling at all they see, they fill an ornamental rather than a useful post. It is even related that in the days gone by Lépine himself was actualy refused entrance to this orgie.

What license, what colour, what riot of youth and exuberance! Thus lived the Roman decadents centuries ago. Every eye flashes with the pride of absolute liberty, every girl is soft and beautiful to behold.

The students took large baskets of food, which were opened at about two a. m. Those who did not bring wine bought champagne in the hall. Indeed, after two o'clock in the morning the hall of the Hippodrome somewhat resembled a battlefield, where lay strewn in gorgeous confusion the robed and the robeless, equally vanquished through having looked upon too much wine when it was red. One would have said that a vast Sultanic harem had been laid siege to by the hot-headed heroes of another age, who had seen to it that none of the damsels had escaped.

Here and there, wrapt inextricably in a fond embrace, a Grecian warrior and the lady of his choice seemed to sleep oblivious of all the trumpeting of all the cors de chasse.

These couples seemed as deep-sunk in their mutual happiness as the opium-drinker on his silken couch. They were clad in whatever particles of raiment happened to be left to them. Others still found strength to support themselves at the bar, where the garçons served cooling drinks and distributed sandwiches.

Here one saw a lusty Greek advancing, clad in a shining helmet, and girt about his waist only with the furs of wild animals; while on his arm leaned a dark-eyed, brown-haired Venus, who wore nothing but stockings and satin shoes. As, however, the two were still able to keep their feet at this advanced hour, they were regarded with considerable respect by those who lay entirely vanquished among the broken bottles and remnants of the feast that strewed the floor.

The ball lasted till six next morning. I don't know whether the ancient Greeks were in the habit of passing such noisy nights, but as a spectacle of colour it was undoubtedly very fine.

At six o'clock daylight appeared, and, all in their costumes, the whole crowd of some hundreds poured out of the hall and made up a procession with banners and cors de chasse. This cortége proceeded through the somewhat deserted streets and reached the Place de l'Etoile, where some unruly students upset a fine private brougham which was standing quietly there. The windows were smashed and the coachman was naturally furious.

After that event about fifty gendarmes accompanied the procession, but this did not prevent a host of students from climbing aloft on the statues that grace the façade of the Grand Palais, where they planted their flags at evident risk to themselves. An unfortunate youth who was proceeding to business at that early hour got mixed up with some ancient Greeks and fared badly, losing his hat in the struggle.

No such procession would be tolerated in London or New York. A few taximétres were quickly occupied at the start by people in flowing robes who had fair models to escort, and some passing furniture vans soon found upon their roofs a few students, who brandished the green branches of trees in their hands, thus adding éclat to the scene.

My friend Eberhardt, the sculptor, in spite of the remonstrance of Mistress Loretta, his friend, escaped from her arms and, quitting the taximétre which conveyed them homewards, leapt into the Seine close to Grand Palais and swam right across the river. Loretta was crazy about it, and all the fellows tried to hold him back before he plunged from the embankment. But he was in—he was swimming

—and soon he was out on the other side, clambering up the slope. Away he went dripping with water and singing at the top of his voice, dancing around with those of Mercier's atelier who had crossed the bridge to meet him!

The whole procession now made a détour and halted in a fashionable quarter off the Champs Elysées, outside the house of Monsieur Bonnat, the Directeur of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, and climbed up under his very window, hoping that, as on previous occasions, he would be prevailed upon to present himself at one of the windows of his house to welcome the students, make a speech, and kiss one of the prettiest models. But his housekeeper, who appeared at a window far aloft, retreated at the terrible noise and uproar, and closed all the shuters, and the gendarmes implored us to take it from them upon their word of honour that M. Bonnat was not there at all, being out of town.

It was only 6.30 a.m., but by this time all the neighbouring residents had been aroused from their slumbers by the blowing of trumpets and the long-drawn blasts of hunting horns. Blinds were drawn, and they looked down—peaceable folk who pay high rents—upon the red and purple-robed crowd who danced and yelled frantically below in the misty hours of the morning.

At last the procession departed and, following the course of the Seine, reached the Quai Malaquais, and turned into the courtyard of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts—that grave and exquisite monument which all students love, for its cool, fountain-besprayed courtyards, for its lovely statues, green lawns and gardens sacred to students only, and the gorgeous paintings on tiles that decorate the walls. Here the cortége came to a halt, and a stuffed image of some imaginary Enemy of Happiness was solemnly burned to ashes under a tall slim and stately pillar surmounted by a carved angel. This terminated the proceedings, and after having coffee it was eight o'clock in the morning and one could retire.

. . . . . .

For those who appreciate the original argot of the Ecole I give a specimen of the printed poster which announced the Bal des Quat'z Arts of 1908:—

BAL DES 4-Z ARTS.
1908.——Epoque Heroique de Sesostris et Ramses——1908
Le Samedi, 16 Mai.
SALLE DU BOWLING PALACE, 12, Avenue de la Révolte, Neuilly-s-Seine.
Ouverture des Portes à 9 heures et demi.
Fermature irrevocable à minuit.

Chapiteux, barbouilleux, boueux et burineux! congratulez-vous d'ores et dêjà les mirettes à la lecture de ces hieroglyphes qui s'posent là.

Adoncques, commet dirait Rabelais s'il était là (mais il n'y est pas pour le quart d'heure) adoncques avons été prevenus quele 16me jour des Ides de Mai—à moins que l'on Hérodote—dans un vaste local specialement AMENAGE (à Neuilly), aura lieu le N me. Bal des 4-Z Arts. Et comment il sera pyramidal, d'autant que l'Egypte antique vous invite à revitir ce jour là les oripaux mirifique et nigrivorins de cette époque posdéluvienne et exotique. Pour une fois depouillez-vous de vos fringues déguelasses et merdiques d'homme du monde et nippez-vous le plus archéologiquement qu'il sepuis se! Que le génie de la connerie inspire a vos méninges facétieuses des originalités et des adaptations sublimes. Entre nous, non mais là, entre nous, évitez de vous habiller chichement avec les laissés pour compte des grands loueurs de dominos et autres qui pour des sommes fantastiquement michées vous engoncent dans des casaques et accessories par trop anachronismathématiques . . . Les bougres qui auraient le culot de venir au bal avec des pompe-la-boue en box-calf, veau marin, toile cirée, etc., seront préalablement cloués au pilori du ridicule. C'est comme les vieux poilus, satyres, tapettes, banquiers à la manque, coulissiers, qui par brique ou pots de vins parviendraient à se glisser dans l'enciente sacrée sous prétexte d'Egyptologie, mais en réalité pour pincer les cu. . . . neiformes de nos jolies invitées, foutez moi ça, en broche, á coups de pied dans la boite à pots, chessez-les hors chez vous et vivement.

COMME PAR HASARD, LE NU EST RIGOUREUSEMENT INTERDIT! C'est emmerdant, mais c'est comme ça.

Les Ceuss 'es qui ont de chouett's copines sont invités à nous les emener en foule et parfumées (not d') Osiris, rapport à la couleur locale car c'est ce que préfere le Dieu RA comme odeur. Ne craignez pas de leur payer de bath's tuniques vaporeuses et gauzeuses si elles sont dans la Moïse! Qu'elles aient l'oel provacateur, le sourire aux lèvres et des appäts hospitaliers et maniables. Recommandez-leur bien qu'eles nous conduisent leur petites amies midinettes ou non. On viendra des Medinet-Abou! A nous les danses chères à Amon-Iris, à tous les sphinx et manitous d'Egypte. Si vous tombez, Mesdames, on est là pour, vous RAMES! Que les massiers, sous-massiers, anciens chef cochons, etc., incrustent dans les cervelles idiotes et rétives des sales nouveaux, le rythme éternel de l'hymn sacro-saint du Pom-

pier. Que l'hymne sacré retentisse de toute part! A nous les cortéges somptueux, que l'ensemble du bal soit d'un effet boeuf-apis! Ne soyons pas comme Sésos tristes! Bref, montrons aux badauds, pipelets, épiciers, gratte-papiers, académiciéns et gens de même acabit, que nos plaisirs et liesses sont d'un ordre supérieur et que l'orgie, ce beau désordre, est un effet de l'art. Toujours rapport à la couleur locale, les cigarettes "Khedive" sont spécialement recommandées. Nous en s'en fout, on ne fume que le NIL. Pour vous mettre en train, tassez vous dans la gentle deux ou trois momies. . . . nettes et allez-y gaiement. Aie donc, amusons-nous, bordel! et que les bourgeois en crévent d'indignation.

A vous, nobles brutes, chers frêres, joie et salut.

LE COMITE.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PATRON'S BANQUET.

DIARY: June 20, 1907.

Last night was the annual banquet of the patron of our atelier, M. Luc-Olivier Merson, a witty and charming old gentleman of about sixty, Legion of Honour, very severe in his criticisms in the school, but nobody in the world more hospitable if you visit him chez lui. The banquet was held in the Taverne de Pantheon, Boulevard Saint-Michel. Just before I arrived I met Mlle. Marthe A——, one of our most charming models. She "has" only seventeen years, and has such lovely brown hair and calm eyes. Of her figure I prefer not to speak, as in the vulgar language of the Press "words fail to describe." I just had time to make an appointment with her for the following Saturday.

On entering the tavern I found a large upper room, where there were all the old familiar faces, and one felt at once at home. They were only at the "hors d'oeuvres."

I wore a pretty button-hole of little pink-and-white flowers, which came from the market that morning. White waistcoat. I was invited to read a discourse, which I had not written, and I began by saying that I did not know what it was like, and that it was quite possible it had been very badly written. I afterwards made a small speech of my own, and was greeted with "félicitations" by everyone, and many handshakes, and the patron got up and shook hands with me, having remarked to his neighbours that it was very "spirituelle."

Charming dinner. We each paid Fr.5.50.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FETE IN THE GRAND PALAIS.

POUR LE PROFIT DES INONDÈS DU MIDI.

This fête, organised by the Automobile Club of France, was a great spectacular success, being patronised by President Fallières and his wife, with thousands of the élite of France as spectators. It took place in a building unrivalled for such spectacle—the Grand Palais, in the Avenue des Champs Elysées.

As the different painting ateliers of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts were invited to lend their aid, by forming part of the cortége, and had all necessary historical costumes lent them gratis by the direction of the Opéra Comique, I have thought this a fit subject for a little chapter to be included, with my other desultory chat about the atelier, to which I am so proud to belong. It was certainly a glorious evening. One rubbed shoulders with half the theatrical and literary world of Paris, in the crowded corridors of dressing-rooms.

Each student of our atelier had the right to bring with him a lady. Some we mounted in front of us on snow-white palfreys lent us by the Opéra Comique authorities. Others we led by the arm, and all these damsels looked so charming in their seventeenth-century robes.

There was no dress rehearsal.

At half-past eight o'clock p.m. the atelier Merson, of which the writer forms a humble unit, began to pour in by the great door in the Avenue d'Antin, and promptly found their way into the huge dressing-room allotted to them, the key of which was handed to the massier by the authorities.

Trunks and packing-cases full of costumes from the Opéra Comique lay upon the floor. Wigs, swords, white-lace ruffles, feathered felt hats of daring and picturesque shape, were seized upon by students and their friends, all who had been permitted to enter being in a frantic hurry to possess themselves of the best costumes.

One unfortunate male dresser belonging to the Opéra Comique rushed hither and thither, tearing his hair in distraction, as sixty or a hundred voices clamoured for different articles of ancient wear.

Those who found no hats even borrowed from fair models their plume-decked head-gear, or tied a coloured cravat round the first battered felt hat they could snatch from a comrade.

The ladies, not unused to disrobe, were as much at home as in the atelier, and occupied one end of the room, where they transformed themselves from merely pretty girls into angelic and fairy-like creatures, from whose black hair flowed white gauze veils, and over whose shoulders scarlet purple or dark green cloaks hung in graceful folds.

Between nine and eleven o'clock the students passed their time watching the horsemen, in their glittering armour, ride up from the incline from the stables underneath the ground floor, and in making complimentary and other remarks concerning the constant stream of newcomers, who entered by the Avenue d'Antin—theatrical stars, graceful dancers, and rugged-looking warriors.

These professionals having passed, the students' turn came at last, and they marched slowly forward, their picturesque van, the "Char Roman Comique," drawn by one horse, bringing up the rear.

Everything that ingenuity could devise had been done to make their chariot worthy of the occasion. It was laden with cardboard sides of beef, bird cages, oil paintings, which were the actual work of students in the school, and which had been chosen for their hideousness—in fact, the chariot resembled a gypsies' van, which had been half-converted into a butcher's shop. Everybody seemed satisfied with the general effect. The mounted horses behaved well. They were ridden by those of the students who knew how to manage them, each carrying in front of him a fair model, seated astride the steed.

The gradual entrance of this strange and heterogeneous cavalcade into the vast illuminated arena, where thousands of the élite of France—ambassadors, statesmen, diplomats, poets, painters and multi-millionaires—were awaiting their appearance, was a thing never to be forgotten by those who formed part of the cavalvade.

Here, perhaps, for the first and the last time, the students of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, with all their intimate camaraderie, their strange, secret traditions, their laughing light-hearted joy of life, stood displayed on this sanded floor, before a vast public. They who so rigorously, as a rule, shut out the general public from the secrets of the atelier, here brought with them on to the scene, the very life and movement and spirit of their artistic life.

Unable to depart from the traditions of the atelier, Bou-

det was still the impertinent buffoon that we knew so well, and strutted and staggered along as though he were flaunting his independence of spirit before our eyes, and for no others.

Labord, short and hideous, led the procession, arm in arm with the tallest student, and both were as much at home as if they were fooling round the studio in an idle hour.

Pierre Boissart, the massier, curled his enormous moustaches and glanced haughtily from side to side, winking between whiles at his favourite model, with whom, later he disappeared behind the scenes.

The hump-backed student, who *will* sing: "Pourquoi briser le coeur, Si plus tard il faut le regretter," till everybody is sick of that song, rolled his eyes fiercely, and reckoned he was as good as any of the bejewelled crowd who were regarding him.

The hired cripple without legs, cul-de-jatte, who, dressed in a gorgeous cloak and hat, propelled himself across the sandy arena on his lowly, four-wheeled board, pulled off the event bravely, and added éclat to the scene. The sand on the floor was so thick, however, that he found the greatest difficulty, with bursting muscles, in ploughing through this Sahara-like arena, and getting round the course. A student, however, armed with a long pole, pushed him forward and facilitated the rolling of his four wheeled board.

There had been no dress rehearsal, yet all the great procession when it passed before the Presidential stand seemed to move to some inner music, which was understood and felt by the atelier, though no one knew exactly the cunning elements of its Bohemian composition.

From the students' point of view this fête was a great success, because they were free to do as they liked. Thus they pranced past the President's platform in great style, without any of that studied gesture which professional actors must of necessity practice.

Blum, the only American student of the atelier Merson, rode a fine horse, with a model clinging to his belt. Later in the evening, I saw him again. Blum's utterance was thick, but he still stuck bravely to his purpose, which was to land his model safe home in his—not her—dwelling place before break of day.

The procession over, the students disrobed, singing and shouting their favourite songs, and then supped off sandwiches and wine, provided from a huge hamper by the massier. One large litre bottle of red wine to each two stuents, and it went down very well.

All were then free to roam at will through the building,

and most of them remained till the close of the entertainment, witnessing several fine performances by well-known theatrical stars, mixing with the superb crowd that wandered here and there around the artificial fiery lake of magic reflections, and falling water, and finaly singing in chorus, somewhat to the astonishment of the assembled audience, a favourite atelier song. Having danced to their hearts' content, they then departed.

Gillot particularly wants me to mention that all the arrangements between our atelier and the management of the Opéra Comique as to costume, car, etc., in connection with our procession were successfully conducted by him.

At the conclusion of the fête a party of twenty-one students with their models walked through the rain and mud to the Halles Centrales, singing all the way. Here they "commanded" an upper rom in a night café, ordered "Soupe à l'Oignon" for all, with bottles of white wine, and shut the door to all intruders. Everyone was equal to the occasion, and the mirth was not allowed to flag for a moment.

Paltz having announced that we were not in a "milieu idiot," the ladies put themselves very much at their ease, and a real live model of diminutive size, but charming proportions, posed as dessert in the middle of the table.

The supper, with songs and speeches, lasted till 4.30 a.m., when all dispersed for their homes.

CHAPTER VIII.

MONSIEUR JEAN VEBER'S BAG.

Come, come! do let's try and get these facts together about this bag. It's so absurdly simple when you come to set them down on paper.

It all arose in this way, for I remember it as wel as if it had happened yesterday.

I came over here to France after ten years' toil in London and had already been to St. Malo, on the Brittany coast once, when I decided to go again. Now I had been lucky enough to get entered as a student in the atelier Merson of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts (I know—I'm coming to the bag, if you have patience), in the atelier Merson, and there of course I met Mathurin.

Mathurin is a French student, with a limp, middle-height body and large, soft eyes, and a silky, soft but well-cut beard. No collar to speak of, as a rule but a voice loud enough to make up for all delinquencies and shortcomings.

It is really a shocking thing to hear him shout at the top of his voice (while all the school is busy painting) and bang with an iron poker or the leg of a tabouret on the tôle (or iron screen) that surrounds the stove in the said atelier. It makes the model wince. For the sake of good form she is obliged to smile, for it is a matter of etiquette that a French girl-model should never show surprise or fear, but the point is that Mathurin, in his loose, blue painting coat, came up to me one day and, throwing his head far back (so that his blue eyes looked like mild stars floating idly in a circumference of long hay-coloured hair) told me that a gentleman he knew, who was a rich artist, Jean Veber by name, wanted a pure-blooded Englishman to teach English to his eldest son, a lad of fifteen, dine in the house, go to the theatre sometimes, and generally make himself at home.

Now at this time, strange to say, I had a leather bag of my own. It was one Macintosh gave me in London.

However, I accepted the introduction and the following Sunday I called on M. Jean Veber—charming man—private house in the Boulevard Pereire, not far from a home for lost cats.

Naturally I was not thinking particularly of bags when I entered his house for the first time because the hall was all full of caricatures of celebrated people, and M. Jean Veber's children were running about here and there, and I was thinking how much, if anything at all, I ought to charge for being English professor to his son—and then Madame Veber invited me to déjeuner and we forgot the money side of the question. I found myself seated in a fine old-fashioned artistic room, with huge open fireplace, turtle-dove in cage, girl of fifteen nursing it from time to time, small bright eyed boy in sort of velvet suit, who looked at you with a glance as keen as a hawk's, and full of daring and wit.

Monsieur Veber himself—oh, a charming man—ask all Paris. Old student of the Ecole, knew Merson, Cormon, everyone.

Then came a day when I wanted to borrow a bag to go to the seaside, because Farrell never dreamt of returning mine when he went to England.

It is perfectly true he left me a lot of washing, collars, pocket-handkerchiefs, and things. But there it is, he never came back, and after swearing my bag was no good to him at all for a flying visit, because it had no key, off he goes with it, having found the key inside, and that was the last I ever saw of him or it.

I was in Guibout's only the other night, where Farrell and I dined off hors d'œuvres and wine—several times—much to the horror of the waiters and the amusement of the assembled company.

I always said that Guibout's gave too much for fifty centimes, and that the house would go into bankruptcy. Sure enough, Farrell and myself were the thin end of the wedge. There was very little of the hors d'œuvres left when we had finished with them, and a bill of Fr.1.20 perhaps, wine and all-told, looked absurd to everybody except ourselves.

I know—the bag—I was just coming to it.

Jean Veber said to me (in French): "If that blackguard friend of yours, Farrell, has really gone off with your bag, my son will lend you a bag upstairs. Claude, find Mr. Parsons a bag to go to St. Malo. Capital, capital—an old wretched bag, but if Mr. Parsons will accept the loan of it——"

I did.

St. Malo you know all about. Thank the Lord that's done for in another chapter. Half of it already printed, which saves me hours of toil.

M. Veber's bag I carried away.

Ah. Stop one moment!

When I asked M. Veber first about the bag, it was some days before. He said at first that he didn't know if he had got one. I went away, touched cash in the "American Register" office—(don't laugh, they're not always stony)—and bought a bag for nine francs in the Avenue de l'Opéra.

You may think that was a strange action on my part, seeing how pressed I was for money, and truly, Girard, who is French, told me that I had been swindled, and that such a bag came apart in the wet weather.

Tant pis. It was bought and I took it home.

Then—not before—I called on Veber's again, and didn't mention the bag, but his son came rushing downstairs with it and said, "The bag, Mr. Parsons! here it is." Madame Veber smiled so kindly that of course I took it away that afternoon without saying that I had bought one the day before. It would have been a sort of insult to their kindness. But as I went homewards by the Gare St. Lazare I took M. Veber's empty bag to the Left Luggage Office and put it in. I made sure I should take it out when I came back from St. Malo in a fortnight. The other bag was already packed, and I only just had time to catch my train for Brittany as it was.

Thus it was that M. Veber's bag was left in storage at Gare St. Lazare, and I went to St. Malo with the new one I had bought.

When I returned in three weeks' time I found there was twelve or fifteen francs to pay on Veber's bag, and being broke could not. I left it there for six months. The bill for its storage had now assumed staggering proportions; and at the end of January, 1908, I went to see the Director of the Gare St. Lazare, who said as I had written and printed articles mentioning seaside places on their line, he would give me an order to have Veber's bag out for nothing.

. . . . . .

Since then I have been running about to all sorts of different addresses with the letter he gave me, but I am always referred further on, and the two aged men in uniform down in the Magasin des Colis en Souffrance at Batignolles admit that Veber's bag is there, locked up. But they really don't dare to take it out. They want more official signatures and reference numbers and orders. And each time I go, the cat who is in charge in the vast lumber room or storehouse looks up at me as if to say:

"Nothing doing, sir. You can't have it."

It is all sunshine between vast shadows in there, and lost

bedsteads lying next to forsaken tanks, cases of Australian apples, dust-laden umbrellas, and other people's hand-bags. What that cat has to look after! And all these things have been lost and forgotten, and shippers are wondering where they are, and consignees in distant countries are wringing their hands in grief, for parcels which have never and will never come to hand. There they lie, with Veber's bag amongst them, in this great emporium of "Colis en Souffrances," in the yard adjoining the Batignolles Station. And the cat basks on them and yawns.

. . . . . .

At last, after being reefrred to No. 17, Rue d'Amsterdam, which is quite close to my home, miles away from Batignolles, I found another department of the Gare St. Lazare Offices, and saw a very kindly manager, who glanced at the document that the first Director had given me, and drew up another document; and when I called the next day he showed me the draft of a letter which required signature; and the third time I called to see him the signature was appended, and with this letter I went down to Batignolles and they fished out M. Veber's empty bag from among a pile in a vast hall and I went away with it.

Here the curtain falls on the last act of the drama of the "Missing Bag."

COPY. CHEMIN DE FER DE L'OUEST.
EXPLOITATION.
Paris, 4 Février, 1908.

Monsieur le Chef de Gare, BATIGNOLLES.
REFERENCE DR. 13288 R.2.

J'ai l'honneur de vous prier de vouloir bien faire livrer franco au porteur de la présente, une valise ayant faite l'objet du Deposit No. 30730 du 30 Juin de l'avis St. Lazare, colis entré au magasin sous le No. 9112.

Vous voudriez bien me faire connaitre la date et la— (illégible) de la livraison.

Monsieur Parsons a remise le bulletin de Deposit référant au dit colis.

(Signé)
LE CHEF DU SERVICE COMMERCIAL.

. . . . . .

Shortly after this, the Chemin de Fer de l'Ouest went smash.

DIARY: Feb. 29, 1908.

Last summer, when all the apples were ripe, I went down to Chauvry-par-Monsoult, missing the right direction at

first and alighting at a little station where a bird sang by the line. It was probably a lark and there were flowers of all sorts of colours in the grass beneath it which accounted for its glee.

It was evidently full summer time outside Paris, and the year just dipping towards autumn. When I got down at length at the right station, I found there were five kilometres of walking to be done to arrive at the village of Chauvry-par-Monsoult, so I had a glass in the café by the station and went out along the country road, filling my pockets with ripe apples under the trees by the cornfields.

So at last I came to Chauvry, with its small and ancient church, and found Monsieur Jean Veber's house, and behold he himself was ill. There he lay in the best bedroom of his country house, which was a rambling, old-fashioned place, with a rambling garden out behind for the children to play in. The cocks crowed loudly in the adjoining farm, which was built on a lavish scale with huge thatched barns and a sleepy look about it.

Veber was drawing one of his amusing pictures on the stone, which was propped up on a frame over the bed. He had broken his leg falling off a horse. I should have been rather proud of such an event, because I neither own a horse nor hire one except very occasionally. But Veber said to me:

"No, do not put it that way in the 'Herald.' I don't want people to think that I was thrown from a horse, as I have some natural vanity. If you are going to write it up, make it an automobile accident."

So in it went as follows:

New York Herald, Paris edition. September 10th, 1907. Tuesday.

M. JEAN VEBER HURT.

"Thrown from Auto, He is Laid Up with Broken Leg in Chauvry Village.

"M. Jean Veber, the well-known French artist, who is taking his vacation with his family at Chauvry-par-Mousoult —a quiet village five kilometres from the station de Monsoult (Seine-et-Oise)—has had the misfortune to break his leg between the knee and ankle, as the result of an automobile accident. The 'chauffeur,' turning a sharp corner, came suddenly on a flock of sheep. Putting on the brakes, he stopped the auto so abruptly that M. Veber was thrown out with such violence that his leg was broken.

"He now passes his days lying quietly by the open win-

dow which overlooks a wilderness of tangled flowers and fruit trees. He expects that the outlook will be unchanged till the end of September. He divides his time between reading biography and following the career of Fluffy Ruffles."

Veber was thoroughly pleased. I passed the rest of the afternoon up in a tree with his son in the rambling garden. They had made a ladder that led up to the higher branches, and there was a sort of plank balcony where you sat up in a perfect forest of green foliage and ate cherries up there, with a book written by M. Veber's brother, the dramatist.

When I came out of that tree—because the trap was ready to take me to the station—I descended mentally from Heaven into—well, I can't call Paris hell, can I?

Now, flowers of the country-side, sleeping under twilight skies—anemone, lilac, wild rose, and thou—spirited poppy—have ye power upon the hour—can the charm of your frail petals and faint perfume fight the city's feverish breath?

But it was always equally delicious in Monsieur Veber's town house. All houses with well-trained pretty children in them are homes. And this great salle-à-manger, with its white walls hung with lovely oil-paintings, enormous open chimney-place, comfortable chairs, and shadowy perspective views down the long wide corridor that led to the salon—all this was home, in the evening hours by lamplight.

Then, like a holy apparition, came slowly down the old oak staircase, the very embodiment of saintly age—Monsieur Veber's mother. Her trembling hands and snow-white hair seemed to command that respect which, even in an age of automobiles and underground electric traction, may still be found reserved for honourable age, in homes from which the loud, insistent voices of the world are well excluded.

DIARY: A "VEBER" ART EXHIBITION.

At the Galeries Georges Petit, 8, Rue de Zéze, an exhibition of paintings, drawings, and sculpture by the members of the new society entitled "La Comédie Humaine" will be opened to-day at half-past two o'clock.

This exhibition, which invited exhibits from English and American artists, will in future be held annually, and has been organised by M. Arsène Alexandre, who acts as president.

The following are the names of some of the caricaturists who are exhibiting their work:—

MM. Cecil Aldin, Brissaud, Cadel, Cappiello, Caran d'Ache, Dejean, Dethomas, Devambez, Abel Faivre, Forain, Gousse, Albert Guillaume, Hermann-Paul, Israels, Jeanniot, Leandre, De Losques, Loysel, de Mathan, Naudin, Perelmagne, Raffaelli, Steinlen, Trigoulet, JEAN VEBER, Vogel, Wély, Willette, etc.

With such names to conjure with, visitors to these Galleries may feel assured of finding plenty of amusement to chase away the gloom of December. The exhibition closes on the 31st of this month.

Special permission was granted me to stroll round the Galleries on Sunday morning, when the pictures were being arranged.

It certainly is a most refreshing exhibition, after the heavy, ornate, and impressionistic styles met with in most galleries. In the hall one meets with the agreeable compositions of Abel Faivre, in charcoal and water-colour.

The painting which will probably attract most attention is that by M. Jean Veber, entitled "Le Jeu," showing a crowd of fashionable gamblers seated around the tables at Monte Carlo. This picture has a history. When first exhibited it attracted general attention in the Salon. It was hung in company with five other paintings by the same artist. So tempting was this corner of the Salon that a barrier had to be erected in front of M. Veber's exhibits to prevent the crowds of visitors who pressed in front from carrying them bodily off the walls. But "Le Jeu" scored a particular success. Indeed, several of those depicted in the painting, including a Spanish Duke, actually wanted to fight duels with the artist, because they found their portraits too realistic, and objected to be seen in company with some of the celebrated demi-mondaines who play at these tables. About the only person who did not talk of sending "her" seconds round was the stout elderly lady seated in the centre of the picture, and whose terribly fish-grey octopus eyes seemed to have grown stone cold in the process of making money at the tables. Yet the portraits which this picture contains were all painted from memory, M. Veber finding it inadvisable, and even impossible—owing to the rules of the establishment—to make even rough sketches while play was actually proceeding. M. Veber has trained his mind to such a point of perfection that he can carry away in his memory a perfect set of likenesses. He then sits down at home and works and elaborate at his ease, and the result is that wonderful series of caricatures, grotesque yet never vulgar, which make a

sure and urgent appeal to the sense of humor of all true Parisians.

Let us now look for a moment at another painting by M. Jean Veber. This is entiled "L'Envie." Here three men without legs appear to be fascinated by a young girl who goes down the road. She has very short skirts; and from the humble point of view of these critical "cul-de-jattes," mounted as they are, only upon wooden boards fixed to the stumps of their legs, she appears especially attractive. Nor does their attention seem to be disagreeable to her, as she is smiling straight in front of her.

In another corner of the same room a picture by M. A. Devambez, called "l'Homme Orchestre," shows a view, taken from on high, of a snow-covered street. Far down below, a man burdened with all the paraphernalia of his "art," including drum, dog led by chains, etc., passes in the night, followed by a troop of running children.

M. Jeanniot shows "Les Voyageurs"—three passengers, including a lady, asleep in a railway carriage, in a nice grey light, making a most mysterious and cosy interior.

M. E. Trigoulet shows a picture entitled "Soirée Bourgeoise"—an after-dinner scene, where there are a collection of human monstrosities, tall, short, and ugly, which would certainly have a bad effect on anybody's digestion.

All the nude figures by M. Alb. Guillaume are delicate in colour. We are shown "Le Reveil," where a young lady is getting up in the morning, and "Le Coucher," where she is yawning because it is bedtime.

"La Douche," by the same artist, represents a charming young lady who is far from thin, being sprayed with cold water from a long pipe by a man in an apron who looks like a concierge, while the latter's wife stands by holding up a sheet to keep herself from getting wet.

Madame Lafitte Desirat has at least ten fantastic and delicious little ladies in wax, beautifully dressed, one for dinner, the other in a tea-gown; one as a simple midinette with a bandbox, another arranging the new gown which her fashionable mistress is trying on; and last, but not least, a lady in complete automobile costume.

Then we have "Le Cireur de l'hotel de Cheval blanc," a painting by M. Raffaelli. With his blacking brush poised in his hand, the bootblack stands amidst twenty pairs of uncleaned boots, in an attitude which says: "Look here, do you call this one man's work?"

Jean Veber shows "Le Plaisir"—where a fat man in evening dress, with his straw hat lying beside him, is seated at a low table out on the balcony of a hotel, talking to a

very nice young lady, who seems to be thinking about the state of her finances, judging from the careful and guarded expression she wears. The fat man is drinking beer, and the young lady tea. Outside—the black night.

M. Pierre Brissaud shows "Le Répos après le berloque" —a charming water-colour. A regiment of French soldiers lying on a bank under green trees, through which the sun filters. Beyond, in the burning sunshine, stretches the plain of cornfields with scattered trees. The shadows and sunlight on the dark-blue jackets of the soldiers are cleverly arranged.

Not far from this picture we meet again with the indefatigable A. Guillaume, who shows a young lady telephoning in bed. All his ladies are either in bed or getting out of bed, but this one is certainly charming.

We find in one corner of the same room quite a collection of pictures by M. A. Willette, including a "Bébé Bourreau"—a nude child holding a tall, struggling white cat by the edge of a tub of very blue water. The cat is evidently making up its mind to the worst.

A panel of four oil paintings is by the same artist. "Cendrillon" depicts a plump and beautiful lady walking down a flight of steps from a fiery castle in the night. She leaves her satin slipper behind her on the ground, showing a very neat, bare ankle and foot.

M. Jean Veber (who, by the way, exhibits no less than fifteen pictures) is met with everywhere. He has a lady in a leopard's den, entitled "La Dompteuse." One leopard has climbed up on the bars of the cage. Another is biting savagely at the stick which the lady tamer (who, curiously enough, wears spectacles and a black, low-necked dress) is pointing at him. Outside the cage a huge crowd of onlookers are well depicted in a haze of electric light.

M. H. Dézire shows a wounded white horse being dragged into the ambulance van in the street, with the usual crowd standing around.

M. Hermann Vogel's horrible pictures of men with the heads of skeletons, representing death introduced into various restaurants, homes, and other cheerful haunts, will again attract attention.

Mr. Cecil Alden will represent British artists in four humorous paintings entitled "The Witch," "The Meet of the Harriers," "Jumping Powder," and "Going, Going, Gone."

In conclusion, this exhibition boasts, according to the printed catalogue, that "elle comprend des œuvres de tous

les artistes qui ont triomphé dans la gaité, la grace, l'ironie ou las atire, et qui, par leur observation amère ou enjouée, ont extrait de la vie :—

"Une ample comèdie en cent tableaux divers,
Et dont la scène est l'univers."

CHAPTER IX.

OUR MONASTERIAL HOTEL.

(1)

One night down on the "Herald" I passed in this little description as a cable-note and duly touched my five francs for the same:—

Extract from the "New York Herald," Sunday, August 18, 19—.

The Hotel Canadian and Colonial, in the Rue de St. Pétersbourg, Paris, which belonged three years ago to the monks of the Sacré Cœur and was founded by a religious sect, the Oblats, has just been put up for sale at public auction, owing to the separation of Church and State. It has a large shady garden, with two great chapels on each side.

The Crédit Foncier bought in the whole estate and resold it to the Société des Immeubles Parisiennes, which resold the finer of the two empty chapels to the Archbishop of Paris, who opens it for public worship next October.

The other large chapel will be converted into a concert hall with six English billiard tables. The main part of the ancient monastery is now run as an hotel. A small Gothic chapel off the hall, with coloured windows and vaulted roof, is used as a salle-à-manger. The State owned a large sum to the Crédit Foncier, so not a single penny of profit has fallen to the Government over the transaction and the monks triumph over the hertics. The "Canadian" will be the only hotel in Paris where good Catholic guests can go to mass straight from their private rooms, as there is a side door leading to the sacred building.

. . . . . .

High up is our hotel; not half-way up the heights of Montmartre—but still almost as high as Place Clichy. Those poor monks—I feel for them every day. What a tug it must have been to leave their peaceful, holy monastery, with its graceful chapels, well-stocked libraries, enormous rambling subterranean kitchen, and cellars stocked with precious wine and golden liqueurs!

Some little time ago I moved into this beautiful, large room overlooking the garden—this large room which is so nice and quiet and stately-like.

Some times I wake in the morning and say to myself,

"No! I won't get up yet to go to the Art School. I will just lie here idle and look out of the window. The sun is streaming in like gold. One half of the shutters is closed and the blue sky shines through the slits; and down there are the tall tops of the trees, bright green in the garden.

"No, I won't get up just yet; for getting up means trouble and squabbles and expense and carrying paints about. Besides—is it worth it?

"Better to lie here and watch the sun and the shadow on the mahogany boards and dream of the monks who once lived here in all piety and prayerfulness."

I meant to rise—yes—very early—somewhere about six o'clock, wasn't it?

But the sunlight on the boards of my room did it. It all looked so very sleepy and quiet and fresh and beautiful.

I will lie here just a minute more. For the mornings are cool and the swallows make a wise whistling music in the air and, although the window is wide open, the sins of the world are shut out for a little while.

Why, look here, I drop fast asleep—and when I really wake 'tis ten o'clock. And I toddle down just in time for coffee and the office, with all the French, English, and American papers to read. I neevr got up early after all.

. . . . . .

TWILIGHT.

Come out in the garden awhile and look up and aloft.

That's my room, that you see right up yonder, shining like a beacon in a sweet wilderness of grey walls—because I left my lamp burning just now.

My window is generally open, for I love, in the Spring, to hear a flash of swallows' song and a rush of swallows' wing go by my room.

And in the summer I watch the people in the houses a quarter or even half a mile away, sitting in their balconies, like people in the tiers of seats at an opera, looking out over our great garden and the gardens that lie between them and ourselves.

The day's work is done and you can tell it from their attitude one and all. There are girls who move slowly to the windows and come out on the beautiful ramshackle balconies far off yonder up against the sky and down by the gardens and the courtyards at the backs of their distant houses.

Then they lean their elbows on the handrail and look over, meditative and pretty.

. . . . . .

DAWN.

Once I came home very tired from the "Mail" offices in the Rue du Sentier—it was the time of the San Francisco disaster and there had been extra calls from London over the telephone—five or six columns to take down in shorthand dictated direct from Carmelite House to the stuffy little telephone box where I was cooped up—I arrived home about five a.m.

Glory, what a sunrise! I could scarcely drag my footsteps up to the fifth floor of our dear old monastery. All the world was asleep. I was wet and limp with fatigue. One does not grow fat on the "Mail" or take cabs home every night.

But when I reached my room I just flung open my window and looked down on the garden where the birds were waking and then up in the sky where the dawn was breaking.

There came a wind from the east, with the glowing of the light and the growing of the day. And this wind played flute notes in the trees and one or two birds made then a quiet harmony.

'Twas all the world like a young girl awaking from a dream and throwing off one by one her lacy robes of night and looking round with blushes at the day.

. . . . . .

ERNEST, THE HEAD WAITER.

I must just give a few lines to Ernest, if he will accept them. He belonged to the old régime. This stout and handsome "garçon" must have been aged about forty-five or fifty, though when first I met him in our hotel he had just had the luck to marry quite a young girl, and they had a small baby.

He painted surprisingly well in oils, so we were friends at once and he talked of making me a special price for dinners and petit déjeuner in the hotel.

It was difficult not to imagine that he was really the manager of the hotel. And the unfortunate way he came to leave the hotel only proves once more that great and open-hearted natures will have their fling and the iron bars of tyranny must burst. For I regret to say that Ernest, in a moment of pride and exaltation, struck Monsieur Benoit, the manager, on the head and so was dismissed from our magnificent hotel.

I was fearfully disappointed. I shall never forget coming down to petit déjeuner in the morning and being greeted—as I entered the lofty vaulted salle-à-manger—with a

clarion-toned thunderous voice, which sang out, as a hearty skipper might yell his word of command in the din of a sea-storm:

"Well, old boy! Good-morning! How are you? That's right! Where will you sit? Here by the window."

Then, going to the lift, he would yell down to the cook in the kitchen below, in stentorian tones:

"Café au lait—un—et bien Chaud!" and enter into conversation with me about the pictures in the Salon, or the Luxembourg, and the painting he was doing at home and which he would offer to show me.

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THE MARQUIS.

One day when I went down to breakfast in the old times —(when Ernest, the enormous garçon, lorded it in the lovely chapel which was our salle-à-manger)—a tall grave man with an almost white beard and a beautiful kindly smile, like a knight in Tennyson's "Round Table" might wear, came into the sunlit room.

He was limping slightly and his great height and proportionate breadth made this the more conspicuous.

He went over to a table near the open window, which gives on the garden—it was then springtime—and sat down.

I noticed he was addressed with considerable courtesy by Ernest, the all-familiar garçon.

I was eating reine-claudes with a large spoon and enjoying a wonderful display of cobalt and purple colours in long splashes of light, on the white stone walls, and the tremble of the leaves on the sunlit trees in the garden, and the magnificent and mysterious charm of this chapel which, by a turn of the wheel of Fate, has become converted into a salle-à-manger.

Soon I learnt that the tall gentleman who limped was the Marquis d'Albizzi, an Italian by birth. He spoke seven or eight languages and wrote them equally well. Decorated by his own country he was also a member of the Royal Geographical Society.

Madame Benoit seemed horrified that an acquaintance should spring up between this courtly Marquis, who occupied a suite of the best roms on the first floor, and myself, who was paying ten francs a week on the fifth.

With what gentle grace this philosopher, who was so much my senior in years and wisdom, approached me I shall never forget.

His dignity seemed to melt away in a sense of the com-

radeship of letters. Could I get a little article of his printed in the English paper I worked for? It would please him so much, whether it was paid for or not, to see himself in print in a language that was not his own. And he showed me the graceful and delicate stories which he had written and published in the French papers.

And then, when I tried to translate my Wellman article into French, he would come and sit down at the breakfast table (petit déjeuner—only brown bread, coffee, and reine-claudes) and work at it with me for hours—till gradually its clumsiness fell from it and it evolved into a graceful French article, quite "Figaro" style.

Oh happy companionship of letters—brief glimpse into the joys of the life of a leisured man who has literary instincts, who has traveled throughout the world, visited every capital in Europe, chatted intimately with crowned heads, been entrusted with difficult and honourable missions—what a masterpiece of tact was this great man, who came stepping towards me slowly on a spring morning, with the smile of friendship and the hand-grasp of a fellow-workman!

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OLD NOTE FROM MY DIARY: September 27, 1906.

Marquis d'Albizzi (Italian by birth, but speaks all languages) is back in the hotel again. Big, mild, delicious-mannered man, wearing ribbon of Legion of Honour, came across and chatted to me at breakfast. Possesses gift of putting idiots at their ease.

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MARTHE (the Loveliest Model).

Sometimes Marthe, the most beautiful model, comes to visit me in the hotel.

Hasten, hasten, Marthe! Enter the Monasterial Hotel by the other doorway where the flowerwoman stands. This is a door which really was built to give entrance to the great Chapel now used as a concert hall. But it so happens that there is a side door leading into the hotel itself. And in the passage under the arched doorway, and in a little room behind it, a nice Frenchwoman sells roses and all the other flowers which she brings straight from the Halles Centrales early in the morning. She is allowed to rent this room and she lives in the hotel. Strange arrangement.

Through this flowery entrance Marthe, the pretty model (whom I have sketched often, in all sorts of costumes, and without any at all), can safely enter our hotel without being

remarked by the proprietor or his wife. She climbs now with me the secret side staircase which the monks probably used for similar purposes.

Silently and swiftly we ascend, till all the five floors are beneath us. I hear always the steady soft rustling of her skirts, a tempting sound.

At last! We are in my room now; and alone together.

Now, you Sweet! kiss me to the music of the swallows.

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TOM THE GUIDE.

Tom the Guide! I was almost forgetting him. He sold good tea very cheap and lived in our hotel in some mysterious capacity.

They called him a guide, and certainly he guided one very readily into any café where "rhum-eau-de-seltz" was to be had.

An Irishman by birth, according to his own account, and moreover a cousin of Lord Charles Beresford (he told me this quite solemnly and I simply put it down as he said it, though I have a brother in the Royal Navy) he was a thorough sport, could quote Shakespeare by the metre, and was favourably known to all the police of Paris. Speaking French and a little German, he managed to pick up a living. But he talked of prosperous bygone days—first when he was in the 15th Lancers—and afterwards as a private gentleman of mysterious independent means in Paris, driving his own carriage and dining in the Café de Paris and Maxim's.

At last—and this is the point—Tom landed up at our hotel, in the time when Benoit ran it, filling it with anybody at any price, and Madame Benoit took a fancy to him, finding him honest, and left him in charge of the hotel office at night-time, with a telephone to look after, about one hundred pigeon-holes for clients' letters, a huge safe, a folding desk, an easy chair, and a large bottle of red wine for himself.

Here Tom was at his best, for he really felt himself in charge—of an enormous hotel—at night-time.

"Seventy years of age, sir, and look at that!" he would say, showing his sword arm which was somewhat withered.

And after he had had a good lot of wine he became insulting. But Madame Benoit was always on his side, so he sailed before the wind out of all difficulties and our hotel was his harbourage.

Of course he went down to meet the trains at Gare St. Lazare, and equally, of course, he captured fluttering and

undecided passengers (especially ladies—Tom was awfully sweet to the ladies) and led them reluctantly into a cab waiting close outside and took them up to our hotel and assured them it was the one they were looking for.

Very often, no doubt, they wanted the Hotel St. Pétersbourg. But it was perfectly easy for Tom the Guide to explain to them that our hotel, the Hotel Canadian, stood in the Rue de Saint Pétersbourg, and that was what they must mean.

Whether they meant it or not they had to come along with their luggage, for they couldn't speak a word of French as a rule and so they fell, an easy prey, into our hotel and settled there, while Tom touched a commission on all they ate and drank.

Tom's scheme was to tell them to go straight in and have a good dinner and to keep on having dinners and to have a fire in their room, petit déjeuner sent up, and burn as many candles as they liked, and at both ends if they wished to. Tom represnted the hotel to them as a sort of Liberty Hall.

And so, strangely enough, it actually was for a time; for, though I could never understand the extraordinary reason, Madame Benoit seemed to have a horror of presenting a bill. Perhaps she was as afraid of it as the customers were when they saw it. Some went black in the face when the bill was presented, said nothing, but fled by night, even leaving, like Joseph, their raiment behind them!

Not that I want to compare Madame Benoit to Potiphar's wife for a moment. I never heard her seducing a young man, though she was a fine, tall, handsome woman, and Tom often called her "his darling." She would give him a playful smack for this freedom of speech. Certainly she was very handsome in her violet dressing-gown of a morning. Handsome and cruel. "A powerful woman, that." I often thus described her to Tom and other friends, with a sort of respect mingled with fear.

She had no idea how to run an hotel. Nor had her husband. He was all for dogs, a gun, and two weeks' shooting in the country. Brought back an excellent bag of game and listened unmoved to Madame's woeful tales of runaway guests, such as the man who fled in his own motor-car when his bill was sent up one morning.

As for Monsieur Benoit, he cared nothing for the hotel. If I spoke to him, asking him for some alteration in the arrangement of my room, etc., he never seemed to hear it, so I just got the servants to do it at once. They would do anything if you tipped them. I have heard of guests who

lived comfortably in the hotel without paying their bill for two months, simply by judicious tips distributed to the servants.

Tom was much the same. If you gave him a two-franc piece he would invent the most ingenious stories by which to appease Madame when she finally clamoured for settlement of a long bill.

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"I'm the interrupter, and interruptions assist good speakers!"

Tom, the official interpreter of the hotel, is talking. He strokes his beard rather nervously with a long thin hand and looks at you with mock-solemn eyes.

He draws in his breath very rapidly after bringing out one of his best witticisms:

"Now—where have you been to-night, sir! Answer my questions categorically, unequivocally, and—without prevarication."

"Good-night, Tom; I decline to give an account of myself."

Talking about the sea, Tom said one night:

"Yes, my happiest days were spent on the sea."

"There's something sympathetic about the sea," I replied.

Tom: "Hoch! If you get a good ctaptain. Did I ever tell you about Captain John X——? He and I were like chums. Arrived at Barcelona (where we had to lay off) I says to the captain: 'Let's go ashore to a sing-song place somewhere.'

"'All right, sir!' We go into a sing-song place and I says:

"'This is a peseta each; and you get a glass of black wine.'

"So we sat down. We have two glasses. And in comes a girl—an English girl that was singing—I didn't know the programme or anything. So she began:

"'Oh! Jonathan, Jonathan, Jonathan—Jonathan, Jonathan, John!'

"He said: 'Look here, you old devil, you brought me in here on purpose—how the h—ll does that girl know that my name is John?'

"He thought I had done it on purpose. So I beckoned her. She said: 'The song was on the programme.' 'You know, this is my captain,' I said. 'He thinks you are insulting him.'

"He brought her on board. 'By Gad,' he said to me next day, 'she was a handsome girl!'

"By the way, did you ever know Taggen Rock in the Sea of Ozoff, in Russia? But we lay twenty-two miles from shore. There's a tug comes down once a day and goes back once a day.

"When we got into Gibraltar the Old Man says to me: 'Now,' he says, 'Steward!'—(always, of course, mighty regimental when the mates and all were all there)—'Now, Steward, if you want to sell your empty beef barrels—because empty beef barrels always belong to the chief steward—Now is the time to sell them—in Gibraltar. They give you two and a half francs for each barrel.' 'Well,' I said, 'I've got nineteen.' He said, 'I will tell the ship's chandler to come and fetch them.'

"We went back again to Odessa. I said, "How much a lb. beef?' Three-halfpence for half-a-pound.'

"I said, 'Where are we bound for?'

" 'Taggen Rock,' he said.

"I said, 'That will do for me.' I said, 'Are you going ashore?'

"He said, 'Yes.'

"Well,' I said, 'look here, I want to go ashore with you.' But he said, 'I'm not going to hear any songs about "Jonathan"?'

"I said, 'No, it doesn't make any difference. Send me down four carcasses.'

"He said, 'What are you going to do?'

"I said, 'I also want two hundredweight of salt.' I said, 'Will you do that or—I will go with you.'

"I had an old pilot there and I had all the boys there to cut it up. 'Now is there anyone here not feeling fit or sound?'

"We had one man there. I said, 'That's all right. You shall have all you want to eat, but don't you touch it.' I made nineten barrels of beef. I gave the carpenter Frs.20 to batten it. We went back again to Odessa. We had 300 bullocks, 1,500 chickens, and sixteen or seventeen horses. You ask me was this Noah's Ark. No, sir. Don't interrupt. We went to Savona, in Italy. There the captain of a ship named 'Huntsman' came in. He said:

"What lovely beef you've got. I have never had such corned beef in my life!"

" 'I made it, sir,' I said.

" 'What?' he said.

"I said, 'How many barrels do you want?'

"Barrels???' he said.

"I said, 'What do you pay for your beef per barrel?' I

said, 'You can have five barrels for £20 and pay the captain.'

"I bought that beef (hushed voice) at three sous!—three-halfpence a pound.

"I said to our captain, 'That's better than hearing the girls sing, "Oh, Jonathan."

"'Now,' I said to him, 'you can have the other beef for £2.'

"Thirty-six pounds (sterling) I made."

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"It doesn't matter to me if you are cousin to Kitchener!" said Tom to Farrell one day. "I'm godfather to Sir Archibald Hunter."

"And I am," he insisted, when I challenged him for an explanation.

CHAPTER X.

OUR MONASTERIAL HOTEL CHANGES ITS NAME.

Becomes the Hotel Windsor, under the patronage of a German, Walter Herrlau, formerly manager of the Hotel St. Pétersbourg, Paris.

One night I invited Burlingham to dine in our hotel. He wrote the following:

Extract from the "New York Herald," Thursday, February 20, 1908:

"Mr. Walter Herrlau, some time manager of the Hotel Saint Pétersbourg in Paris, has just taken control of what is probably the oldest hotel in France. He has leased the old Oblat monastery at 26, Rue de Saint Pétersbourg and is now at work turning it into a modern hotel, to be called the Hotel Windsor. All of the quaint architecture and historic halls are to be preserved, but one of the chapels is to be turned into a dining salon, while the second chapel, purchased by Cardinal Richard shortly before his death, is to be used for church services. Visitors at the hotel, therefore, will be able to go to church without leaving the building.

"That a monastery should be turned into an hotel catering to American tourists is due to the separation of Church and State in France. 'I am forced to make a few changes, such as putting in an elevator and a number of bathrooms,' said Mr. Herrlau yesterday to a 'Herald' correspondent, 'but it would be sacrilege to change the Gothic designs and stained glass windows in the high ceilinged rooms. What I want is to run an absolutely first-class hotel, affording at the same time the illusion of life in a quiet, quaint monastery. The central position of the hotel is sure to bring success to the venture.

"In rearranging the hotel, which is now open for visitors, strange books and pamphlets left behind by the monks in their hasty retreat have been discovered. When the monastery was put up at public auction it was bought in by the Crédit Foncier, who resold it to the Société des Immeubles Parisiens. For a short time it was used as an hotel under the name of the Canadian and Colonial Hotel. Last summer there was some talk of using one of the chapels as a concert and billiard hall. But this shocked devout Catholics and the scheme was abandoned and dinners will be served there instead. The monks' refectory is to be left intact with its great open fireplace. One charming thing about the hotel and its site is its large garden. Mr. Herrlau says he intends to use this in summer for open-air meals."

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Our dear old Monasterial Hotel is changed in a flash under the new German manager. Geo. Herrlau is like a magician—an evil one, I was tempted to add, for I lost my room with the garden view three weeks after he arrived.

One day scaffolding covered the entire face of the building. Then workmen scraped the whole of the hotel down from top to bottom. A wicked noise it made of an early morning.

But from being a dull grey colour the hotel was now suddenly changed into sparkling white.

And Tom the Guide was driven from his room on the top floor into the very streets, raging with pent-up passion. He who had once locked visitors out himself if occasion required it—he who had said to one man "Go," and he went; to another "Come," and he came, was now driven out of the hotel, and saw cold-blooded, sleek, well-dressed managers and under-managers and clerks fill his place in the office, and sit at Madame Benoit's desk.

I met Tom on the Rue de St. Pétersbourg to-night, coming towards the hotel. He seemed quite overcome when he saw me, and I thought at first he was going to weep. But instead he asked me to lend him five or even two francs, which by luck I was able to do. He then went to interview the new manager of the hotel and see what he had to say. Tom's last words to me were: "Find me at 15, Rue d'Amsterdam, when you want me."

He always reminds me a little of that drunken rascal in Robert Louis Stevenson's "Treasure Island" who came to the inn on the cliff one night with a trunk, and called for a glass of rum, and stopped five years!

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Most of the guests have already removed from the Monasterial Hotel. The workmen are gradually invading every room. My turn will soon come, and like the monks, I shall have to go. It seems very hard, after three years' residence in a place which is filled with agreeable associations. But German enterprise, and capital, with its new bathrooms, and lifts, drives everything before it.

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How I shall miss the grand sound of the music coming up from the chapel, when they were practising a concert next door to our hotel. I could lie in bed with my window open on the garden and hear all the violins and the trumpets in a soft melody on a summer's evening—suddenly checked when the bar of music had to be tried over again. And at last played quite perfectly, so that one might sleep on it.

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And Benoit's dogs barking in the night in the cold winter time. I shall miss all that, for I could hear them in the garden from my room. And when I waved my hand out to them in the morning they would look up and stop barking by magic.

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But worst of all the swallows, in the spring and early summer. Oh, how I shall miss those! Our huge monastery, you must remember, is immensely lofty. And perched up where I was on the top floor, with a dormer window on the garden, I was quite amongst the swallows.

One summer morning I was dreaming, and they woke me from my sleep. I felt like a mountain stream that flows suddenly into the embrace of the sea, so sweet was the swift change from strange dreamland to glad and innocent reality of life. I lay quite still and the great circle of swallows, all whistling like wild, were still passing my windows. When the leaders had passed I was asleep, but the tail end of the circle found me aake and listening. How they would dive and poise and follow one another, high above the topmost trees in the garden.

At twilight they were magnificent.

They wove themselves into one maze of rapid song. They seemed the crowning glory over all the smiling city. As though Paris, the dear gay city, were making her toilet for the night and had a crown of singing birds to hover round her head.

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How brave the swallows are! Trusting to God, and leaning on the breeze they wing their way across wide oceans, having no money for the journey, only their tiny wings. What great hearts in what small bodies! They come back to our gardens in the spring, and find after a thousand weary miles the nest they built the year before, and there they settle down and twitter under our eaves, and poise in the air, and dart and scream as they catch their flies.

Gee whiz—what a noise past my window! There must have been six all after the same fly. What twilight squabbling, some two hundred feet above the ground.

They seem to be hovering in some ordered dance in the air, threading the mazes of a wild quadrille, like winged partners, minute but mighty aeronauts before the Lord.

They have sown all the heavens with song.

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The swallows have gone away. They no longer weave their sudden flashes of music—those flying webs of song—outside my window in the early morning and at twilight.

There was something beautiful in that swift, circling song, that maze of music which they made as they dashed round the garden. It was a sort of musical skirt-dance, a wild whirling and waving of whistling, in crescendo and diminuendo, full of artistic gusto.

It flung itself hither and thither like long winding ribbons of different colour.

The swallows have gone.

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Scrape! Scrape! Scrape! Herrlau's forty workmen make a very different music on the stones of the monastery. His new lift, his heating apparatus—his new w.c.'s and bathrooms—his new name for the hotel—what a wicked sacrilege it seems!

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They tore my pictures off the walls while I was absent. The housekeeper couldn't wait one day!

"We *must* have your room, sir."

And, by George! she got it, and some of the pictures along with it, for I miss them to this day, especially the sketch of Craemer, which was pinned on my wall. It was lost by them the night he came to see me, after his two years' absence.

And the servants threw away the flower that Fernande gave me, and they are d——d thieves, the whole lot of the new management.

I was moved down on the floor below, which faces the street, and trams make a hideous noise all night, and there is no garden, no swallows, no view.

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Well, but I suppose I shall have to take back all my hard words and bitter thoughts before the eternal mirth and good fellowship of Mr. Herrlau, the new manager.

I dined with him and his housekeeper last night. What an amusing man. He brought to dinner, in a piece of paper, a great slab of cold charcuterie and divided it between us there. He said he had bought it outside, on his way home, for thirty-five centimes. He went straight from that to delicate wings of chicken and sweets fit for the gods, served by the immaculate hotel waiters.

How we talked, too, over the benedictine! He is an excellent companion.

He has even offered to let me take over to my new atelier in the Latin quarter, when he pitches me out of this monasterial hotel at the end of the month, the fine furniture which now stands in my room, and which I am to buy from him for a mere song.

I lift my glass to Monsieur Herrlau and wish him, as he always wishes me, "Another thousand a year!"

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FRERE COLLIN'S YARN.

This morning being a fine, brilliant day, I rose early, to-wit (as the owl said) at six o'clock, and descending the stairs—leaving my lamp burning merrily for boiling water—I went past all the litter created by Herrlau's workmen, who had scarcely yet appeared on the scene, and found my way down to Marthe's secret staircase.

I had been thinking almost equally of Marthe and Mademoiselle Peyter (the two impossibles), but my mission was now a serious one, as I went, on the introduction of Monsieur l'Abbé Aubréjeac, to interview another abbé, who had lived forty years in this hotel, when it was a monastery.

Opening a side door on the first landing, which had been pointed out to me two days previously, I descended another staircase and found myself in a passage where the inscription painted on the wall, "Salle d'armes," left me in no doubt that I had found the room I was in search of. Opening a small door I found myself in an ante-room which presented somewhat the appearance of an actor's dressing-room, with pegs on which white blouses were hung, a looking-glass with dressing-table beneath it; and inside certain glass doors I heard the murmuring of priests, gathered together for solemn service at this early hour.

This, then, was the last refuge, the supreme retreat of those who had been hunted and expelled from their favourite monastery.

Here was all that remained of the once formidable band of monk-missionaries to whom this entire building formerly belonged. They still continued almost secretly to celebrate, at this quiet hour, their sacred service.

Many reflections arose in my mind as I stood there. Presently the glass door opened, and I caught a glimpse of a superb altar and crucifix. The abbé whom I knew, and had already met at dinner in the hotel, then stepped forward and personally introduced me to an elderly man with sparse white hair—the Brother Collin—who had, during forty years of his life, known our hotel as his monastery.

He said to me: "There are no less than twelve separate

establishments of the Oblat monks (to which order I myself belong) in England. There is one at Kilburn, another in Edinburgh, in Dublin, in Leeds.

"We were here only twenty members, belonging to the general administration, but this building was, as it were, an hotel for the accommodation of the French missionaries, who went and came to and from Canada, and in this way the building was often full. This establishment was the headquarters of the order. It was the Maison Générale.

"The present salle-à-manger of your hotel was the Chapelle Intèrieure.

"We were first expelled by the State in 1880. We returned to the monastery in 1893, when the Russians came, headed by the Czar, to visit France, and when the Government was, for the time being, less mindful of its hobby of persecution. Invited by President Felix Faure, these guests monopolised the Governmental and public attention, and the monks crept back into their home.

"We were despoiled in 1901. Expelled in 1902. Even our furniture was stolen by the State. You have it now in the hotel."

On this statement I wished the kind abbé good morning, as the sympathy of a layman like myself would have been a waste of words.

At my request Monsieur le Frère Collin also wrote me the following descriptive historical sketch of the convent, and I have thought it interesting to give it in French—exactly as he wrote it. But I also append my translation of this document.

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"Nous allons esquisser à grands traits l'historique du Couvent des Missionnaires OBLATS de Marie Immaculée, situé rue de St. Pétersbourg, à Paris. . . . D'abord il faut dire ce que sont ces missionnaires. Après la grande Révolution Française, Monseigneur Charles Joseph Eugène de MAZENOD fonda la Congrégation des OBLATS pour combler le vide affreux que la révolution avait fait en France. Ces missionnaires se répandirent bientôt dans toute la France, et les Evêques d'Angleterre et du Canada les demandèrent et les établirent dans leur diocése. C'est ainsi que nous les trouvons à Tower Hill, London; Kilburn; Leeds, Leith, Inchicore, etc. . . . Nous les rencontrons à Ceylon; et à Freemantle (Australie).

"Paris étant le centre où s'arrêtèrent ces Missionnaires pour aller s'embarquer au Havre pour l'Amerique

et ailleurs, les Oblats furent pour ainsi dire forcés de batir un pied-à-terre dans la Capitale. C'est le Couvent que l'on voit aujourd'hui. C'était comme un grand hôtel ou tous les Missionaires trouvaient la plus large hospitalité de la part de leurs supérieurs majeurs qui en avaient fait leur résidence.

"A l'époque où les OBLATS batirent leur couvent, il-y-a cinquante ans, tout le quartier où il est situé était désert, des terrains vagues où des rues étaient tracées sans aucune habitation; mais les constructions attirées par le Couvent ne tardèrent pas a s'élever comme à l'ombre de cette résidence des Missionaires. Tout en faisant le bien dans un quartier dèpourvue d'Eglise le Gouvernement les chassa de leur paisible demeure en 1880—dans l'octave des Morts 5 Novembre—mais ils conservèrent la propriété du Couvent.

"La visite des Marins Russes en France et à Paris et d'Alexandre III. avait detourné les yeux du Gouvernement de dessus le religieux expulsés. Ceux-ci purent rentrer dans leur Couvent pour reprendre leur vie habituelle—pendant quelques années encore. Mais la fameuse loi de 1901 leur prit—pour ne pas dire leur vola—leur biens et les chassa de leur paisible demeure. Alors le gouvernement de la République vendit le Couvent et l'Eglise attenante au Couvent à une Société devenue propriétaire du Couvent dont nous nous entretenons et dont nous en donnons l'historique aussi complét que possible, a été loué pour en faire un hôtel sous le nom Grand Hotel Canadien and Colonial—pour rappeler probablement que les Missionaires chassés de leur maison ont pris la route du Canada et des Colonies Anglaises, plus hospitalières que leur propre patrie; aujourd'hui l'hôtel Canadien se transforme à l'intérieure et devint Hotel WINDSOR. Le style d'architecture soit extérieur soit intérieure rappelera toujours que ce sont des moines qui ont bâti et qui ont habité cette demeure. La Salle Capitulaire, devenue salle-à-manger, laisse deviner au premier d'entrée et le corridor du nez de chausée.

"L'Eglise gothique ornée de magnifiques vitreaux au chœur est rendue au culte, après avoir été sous scellés du Gouvernement pendant des années et vendue par ce même gouvernement.

"Il y a cinquante ans lorsque les missionnaires bâtirent leur Couvent au milieu des champs ou terrains vagues, le prise du terrain était à bas prix. Aussi ils en achet-

èrent plus qu'ils en avaient besoin pour leur Couvent, aujourd'hui l'hôtel WINDSOR jouit d'un jardin d'agrément.

TRANSLATION.

We are going to give a rough sketch of the history of the Convent of the Oblat Missionaries of the Order of Marie the Immaculate. This Convent is situated in the Rue de St. Pétersbourg, Paris. We must commence by explaining that this is a Missionary Convent. After the great French Revolution, Monseigneur Charles Joseph Eugene de Mazenod founded the Congregation of the Oblats in order to fill the terrible blank which the Revolution had made in France.

These Missionaries soon spread themselves throughout the entire length and breadth of France, and requests came from the Bishops of Great Britain and of Canada, asking them to come and settle in their dioceses. Thus it is that we find the Oblat Missionaries at Tower Hill, London; Kilburn; Leeds, Leith, Inchicore, etc. We find them at Ceylon; and at Freemantle in Australia. As, however, Paris formed the centre where all these Missionaries stopped and found a temporary home before they went to Havre and embarked for America and elsewhere, the Oblats were forced to build what might be called a "pied-à-terre" in the capital. Thus arose the Convent that we are describing to-day. It was, as it were, a great hotel where all the Missionaries found a hearty welcome, and a liberal hospitality awaiting them at the hands of their Superiors. To these latter the Convent served as a permanent residence.

It was fifty years ago that the Oblat Monks constructed the Monastery, and at that time all this quarter whereon it stands was a desert composed of barren lands and grassy building sites through which streets had perhaps been planned, but never built. Once the Convent had been constructed, however, there soon arose under the shade of this missionary residence a host of cottages and minor buildings.

In spite of the fact that the Missionaries were doing a charitable work in a district where previously no Church existed, the Government did not hesitate in 1880 to expel them from their quiet Home, but the Convent remained their property. This expulsion took place in the Octave des Morts, on November the 5th.

The visit of Alexander II. and the Admirals of the Russian Marine to Paris next detracted the attention of the French Government from the Monks who had been ex-

pelled, and these latter were able to return into their Convent and to resume their ordinary life, which they continued for some years.

But the famous law of 1901 took away from them—I might perhaps say "stole" from them—their property and expelled them once more from their tranquil seat. Then the Government of the Republic sold the Convent (and the Church attached to this Convent) to a Limited Company which had been formed for the express purpose of purchasing sacred buildings. This Company having thus become proprietors of the Convent whose history we have rapidly described, they leased it as an Hotel under the name of "The Grand Hotel Canadian and Colonial"—a name probably chosen by way of perpetuating the memory of these Missionaries, most of whom when expelled had taken ship to Canada and other English Colonies, where they found extended to them a hospitality which was refused to them in their own country.

To-day many alterations are taking place in the interior of the Hotel Canadian, and it assumes the new name of Hotel Windsor.

The style of its architecture, both exterior and interior, will always, however, recall the fact that the Monks built this edifice and dwelt therein. The "Salle Capitulaire," now converted into a dining-room, is of a style of architecture which conclusively proves, at the first glance, that it was constructed to serve the purpose of a sacred building.

The Gothic Church, the choir of which is ornamented with magnificent coloured glass windows, has been repurchased by the Church, after having been placed for some time under the Government seals, and sold by the same Government.

Owing to the fact that fifty years ago, when the Missionaries built their convent, building sites were obtainable in the quarter at very low prices, the Monks bought more land than they had actually need for. Thus it is that the Hotel Windsor to-day possesses a pleasant garden.

. . . . . .

THE PRIDE OF FRANCE.

Fifteen pretty girls this morning,
  Marching through the town—
Some were dressed in black or grey,
  Some in white or brown.

They all stepped like the Queens of Earth,
  And smiled like happy lovers;
Some went to work in hatters' shops—
  Others in shops of glovers.

And one especially I saw—
  Her eyes shone like a star.
She crossed, all trim as any yacht,
  The Place de l'Opér*a*.

Her mouth was tucked in dimples fine,
  Her chin spoke tomes of Love,
And in her hat a pheasant fine
  She carried up above.

Oh, Tra-la-la, the Paris girl,
She sets the coldest heart awhirl
With ankle neat and winsome curl.

. . . . . .

CHAPTER XI.

THE LIGHT THAT FAILED.

The "American Register" is a weekly newspaper printed in English, which is sold every Sunday on the Boulevards of Paris. Run by Count Hamon, whose magnificent offices are at 8, Place de l'Opéra, just over the offices of the "Echo de Paris." The paper is amalgamated with a banking business, where the writer and the young French lady mentioned in the following chapter worked together for some time. At a certain period the huge electric-lit sign, which is fixed on the face of the building, and which helps to make the Place de l'Opéra so brilliant at night time, ceased to shine, owing, probably, to the financial crisis in America.

At the time of writing this light is still extinguished.

. . . . . .

BABY PEYTER.

"Canst thou not drink this cup?
Look! there are tears in it!"

December 11, 1906.

Baby Peyter is so bright, but I can write no poetry about her. She was sent to us by Broadbridge of ever-blessed memory—and Loewy engaged her forthwith.

Baby Peyter will sit still while I sketch her—still as a mouse. Afterwards, with a heavenly smile, she will ask for the sketch and pout if it is refused. Baby Peyter drank my tea yesterday and was to have given me a kiss for it—but she owes me that still.

One day, perhaps, when the room is quiet, and the long rays of the afternoon sun come slanting into our workroom striking across her table—when all the world is absent, Baby Peyter will give me (comme la benédiction d'un amour pur) that beautiful kiss, not for the cup of tea at all, but for me, so I can steer my way out of the dark by the memory of her beauty and kindliness.

Thus amid all that is most loathsome in life, while the corpses of dead ambitions jostle one another on the reeking tide, and the ghosts of past years rise up and mock our present misery, this trim little snow-white yacht comes bearing down upon us, showing a light in the darkness, and hailing us with the merry voice of hope.

. . . . . .

Baby Peyter talks and writes English almost as well as French, as she has been in England.

. . . . . .

December 17, 1906.

It was on Saturday morning that I went into the office at twelve, and finding Miss Peyter was engaged in a long conversation with Clément, I took offence, and tore in half the water-colour portrait of her that I had begun. It tore across the neck, just under the chin, in a slanting line. The drawing lay in two parts for her to see as she went out, and, like a born phraseur, I framed the words of my excuse:

"I have torn it because you have torn my heart."

As she moved brusquely away I seemed to descend four steps into the darkness of a gigantic pit, lined with pictures of the past. Here stood solemn figures, with fingers pointing to sad lessons graven in everlasting characters on the walls of memory. The darkness of the pit echoed with this monotonous refrain: "Bad-tempered people live always alone, they have no friends; like outcasts and exiles they huddle o'er the dying embers of Lost Opportunities, shunned by all, and meeting the resentment of all Wise Men."

I was now descended twenty steps into the pit. The noise of life grew dim. I walked like one branded with the curse of melancholy. I still fulfilled the usual petty tasks of duty; but they all semed shrunken and dwarfed into infinitesimal and absurd proportions beside the gigantic signs and warnings in the portentous pit.

Five hundred nights eclipsed the light of day, and voices, dreadful in their derision, cried relentlessly:

"Doomed! Forgotten! Unforgiven!"

In the world above the pit, where the office stands, near the Opera House, I saw her pass out into the passage, and, following, watched him and her talking together near the door. They were discussing my character. He said to her, without doubt (for I could not hear the words, as they talked French):

"Beware of that man. I know him."

Forty steps into the pit. One must feel one's way. And all the walls are prickly with swords of Reprobation, and Daggers of Innuendo, that make the Mind bleed and the Soul sigh.

Here one learnt terrible lessons: How the opening bud may wither, before the flower has bloomed; how, under the Roses of Life—lie pitfalls. And behind the happy hours —when all the silence of the night is full of chiming bells—chaos and ruin reign—and loneliness.

(All this was real, because I felt it.)

Without doubt it was his fault. While I was out he must have crept, snake-like, across my path and told her not to trust me.

Not understanding my native language, he can have no human sympathies. And, jealous of her friendship for me, he—that wretch—has stolen from me her regard—not to keep himself (for he could not do that)—but to spite me.

He knows nothing of what this costs me, or how I staked my life and all my thoughts on her.

A gloomy and miserable lunch at Chartier's—reflecting in wrath how best to smite him. Yet haunted sometimes by the thought that the fault is mine. Now I have made myself the laughing-stock of the office. For, like others whom I knew, she will take sides against me, and stand, all guarded by the others, to point the finger of scorn at me from her point of vantage. This is all an old story told again. All this has happened once or twice before.

But in the darkness and suddenness of the descent this Pit is darker than the others. She was so bright and winning—such a child. One cannot talk to children of strange things, of moods, misunderstandings, and the like. That is the good they do us—to brush away these cobwebs from the mind and set the bells of laughter jingling. Nothing is serious in their hearts, and so the seriousness of life dies out and leaves its joy.

I see now what has caused all this. I was alone with her a moment last evening—Friday night. The others were gone, and I felt a lump rising in my throat, and wanted to lift her in my arms and embrace her. Baby, I called her.

Well, I have got in my heart a bitter feeling that must be satisfied. A friend in the restaurant says something to me about my not having visited his nephew. Visiting a nephew? A nice time to suggest that!

But all this is happening in the world above. They do not see that I am working in a pit, and can visit no one, and must be left alone to brood on everlasting losses of which they know nothing and which they would not understand.

So I go back to the office; but I can hardly sit there. She does not talk to me now. Once she glanced at me with suspicion. He has done his work. He has poisoned her mind. There are, however, things to be done in the office. She moves her chair so that I can no longer see her. I am now entirely behind her, in the darkness of mind of those shut out of Paradise.

I feel something of regret, also, that all humour passes

out of the situation. Because it is not humorous to lose a pretty friend. When one has walked long alone it is hard to lose that sweet companion who joined us just an hour ago and whom we have driven away by some bad mood of ours. I hear her soft tones saying "Good night" to me, and the clasp of her little hands was a guarantee of Peace and Happiness. O close, close she sat to me and spoke low and lisping words. The darkness was not yet come.

SATURDAY NIGHT.

Taking down letters at seven o'clock. I cannot escape from this accursed room. The manager continues mumbling about his business affairs and I write it in shorthand, mechanically. He does not know that I am walking through a Pit of Misery. She must have gone now. If she has not gone I shall hand her a note to ask her to come into the Salon and speak to me.

It grows later and later. This dictation continues. By this time She must have gone. Yes. The rooms are empty when I return to write my notes. I write her a letter to explain why I was in a temper. I find myself on a 'bus which goes along glittering avenues. It is 8.30 p.m. The road is deserted, and the great 'bus seems to lose itself in interminable plains of lamplit darkness.

At last we arrive and deliver the note. It does little good. We are glad to see her sister for a moment, outside the door of her flat, smiling and pleasant.

Away once more. Into the dark. We have supper at Guibout's. A horrible meal. No peace. No sleep all night. Thoughts of revenge. Next morning is Sunday. To the office at eleven.

We see her empty chair. We do letters and go to lunch at Chartier's.

We have now evolved in our head a complete scheme of a harangue to be delivered against this Clément. It begins thus, in French:—

> *"C'est curieux que vous n'est pas pressé d'apprendre la langue anglaise. C'est dommage, parceque les explications sont plus difficiles. Et sans doute vous trouvez mon façon de parler fançais est très amusante!
>
> "(Plus féroce.) Mais moi, je ne le trouve pas amusante. Et je crois il-y-a une manière de régler une affaire de cette sorte—une manière française, qui est tout-à-fait agréeable.
>
> "Et je vous invite, Monsieur" (avec ironie) "de régler cette même affaire dans cette excellente facon française—ou bien vous etes un sale lâche!"

(By this time the victim ought to be worked up for a good quarrel.)

"Et puis, aprè que vous étiez parti hier soir, on m'a appris que vous allez par çi et par là, murmurant et chuchotant les mensonges touchant mon carectére. Comme un couleuvre qui rampe par couleuvre, qui rampe par çi et par là, chuchotant les mensonges touchant les gens honnêtes!!

"Vous parlez de Mademoiselle Peyter???

"Je vous assure, mon petit, que je n'ai rien à faire avec Melle Peyter. C'est à vous—a vous que je parle —et je vous coigne dans le nez."

. . . . . .

The recital of this programme of vengeance, so shortly to be enacted, afforded me great satisfaction, even in the pit of misery.

We practice the phrases and even look up words in the dictionary.

No doubt we shall be expected to fight a duel.

So a horrible Sunday passes.

In the afternoon we find ourselves in the Salvation Army Room at 66 Rue Montmartre. Gloomy forebodings. We have gone astray. We have sunk very low.

At last, having returned to the office and posted the letters at the Gare du Nord, we get back to dinner at Guibout's.

(We look forward to another hideous night—to lie awake trembling with rage, reciting the French programme.)

Overwhelmed with fatigue and thoughts we gain rest at last in listening to a piece of music called "Supreme Iveresse." A vision passes before us. We are in a great church. It is night time. Across the echoing flags pass hosts of shadowy figures like the dead. Here and there, his arms folded upon his breast, is the lifeless body of some warrior, the battle of whose life is past. As the golden chalices of incense swing to and fro, these dead, who have at last found rest, lie still for ever. There is something intensely restful in the sight.

It may be that this vision belongs to the pit. But it is one of midnight, of everlasting calm; of the passing of souls out of their corporeal prisons; of the end of all things. If any refrain is mingled with this solemn scene, it is that of a requiem, almost a forgiveness.

. . . . . .

*The Author is careful to present this letter in the absurdly bad French in which it was written four years ago, without the many corrections which he would be inclined to make in it to-day.

We go and get our washing, and so home, and sleep quietly, and art school in the morning.

And then it is time to go to the office.

. . . . . .

MONDAY.

Now the hour has arrived. In the midst of the pit a scene rises up. It is the old office at 8, Place de l'Opéra. I mount the stairs. The task is set and must be accomplished. However cold it seems to go back there without any greeting, every man must walk forward and face the music, or the absence of music. This is a fact, where the dark pit and the life of the world above mingle for a moment.

For she is surely there, though she will not speak to me.

. . . . . .

I enter. She turns round. She wishes me good morning. There is a smile on her face. She excuses herself for not having seen me that Saturday night. It was too late. She was undressing.

And she would have written to me, but I did not put my address on the letter.

. . . . . .

A great black veil seems rent in twain. The darkness of the pit is rolled up and folded away. If the room were not full of people I could sink on my knees before this kind angel who gives me back my life and my hope.

. . . . . .

It was the voice of my darling that drove away the darkness. And I heard outside in the street the tin trumpet of the chair-mender, trembling across the frost-laden air of the morning; and the shouts of those who sold the papers seemed like music and mingled with all the cheerful sounds of life outside the pit.

. . . . . .

THE DEMENAGEMENT IN THE OFFICE.

Thursday, December 20, 1906.

To-day the great demenagement took place. It was decided that all of us should move into Frankfort's big room. You never saw such an amusing chaos in all your life.

Miss Peyter leapt upon the great new table that came from the Salon de Lecture and danced a sort of war dance by way of doing honour to the change of rooms and inaugurating the new era of anticipated prosperity.

Then there was a sort of game of scramble—postman's chair, or whatever they call it—to get the place at the huge table which was next to Miss Peyter. We put our ma-

chines down on the table, and I gradually slid my Remington into the place of Clément's—which was an impossible place, by the way, because it was between the table and the wall where nobody could pass you. Still, like that, I should be next to her.

And Frankfort came in and altered the whole arrangement. It was fair agony. But presently Miss Peyter chose her own place and came and sat next to me.

All this time Hayden was kept running about from place to place, for everybody was changing rooms; and Hayden wanted the letters for Cloudstone for the post.

Miss Peyter to-day read my "Saturday to Monday." She is a darling.

. . . . . .

Oh, Life—thine outlines are never fixed for one moment. Thou art changeable like the changing waves of the Ocean, which cross and recross, and curl themselves in foamy crests, and are never weary of restlessness.

And poor Man tries to follow his Star of Hope across all this roaring, raving abyss. And often, how often, this Star is quite eclipsed and he runs after false gods. Then he sees the little Star afar off, and strikes out once more to reach it. And it seems to him that the Star descends upon the earth—all at once it his dear reality, is close to him. He stretches out his arms to seize it. He believes he feels against his cheek an exquisite caress of a Spirit. The flesh seems nowhere.

Then there is a great silence. And it is Death who sweeps him away. But the Star—he has the Star, folded against his breast.

. . . . . .

There was a short circuit in the office to-day at Miss Peyter's elbow, and a great white flame flashed out of the wall. She was so startled she jumped aside and fell on the floor—or to escape it she flew there. I thought she was hurt, but she was not hurt in the slightest.

. . . . . .

I have known when the small tangles of Life (like the difficult skeins of knitting wool that a woman's fingers will unravel with a light and delicate touch)—when all these tangles of Life will straighten out, and a great spirit of progress and uniformity carry all before it.

Then the discordant sounds of the orchestra of Life, the false notes made by the musicians who are still only tuning their instruments—are swept away in the flood of the full

melody; and thus and thus—all the petty bickerings of life are borne away on the strong current of a rising tide. And then it is that we look for the birth of great things.

Poems, long ravelled up in the brains of dreamers, unfold the glory of their splendour—like a flower unfolds its petals in the full blaze of the July sun. Then it is that those long trampled on rise up in revolution, and kings, hidden in their golden palaces, hear the dull roaring of the armies of their rebel subjects, and flee, pale-faced, to hide their crowns, and then themselves.

Then it is that the white Dove of Learning, flying above the flood of Ignorance, finds the dry Land of Knowledge, and comes back to the Arks of Industry, bearing in her mouth the green olive leaf—the Secret of some new and wonderful success, in Art or Music.

Happy are those who, content to take their lot in this sometimes sorrowful world, and forced to listen to much that jars upon the ear, to many discordancies and much bitterness, hear now and again, rising above the din of workshops and the clash of antagonistic creeds and politics, the sublime song of the gods, who weave overhead in the looms of heaven the great rainbow-coloured raiment of the years of fuller knowledge and maturer wisdom that are yet to come.

. . . . . .

BABY AND THE 'BUS.

When Baby and I rode up to the Place de l'Opéra on the 'bus together, all the streets went by us like enchanted places, for we cast over them the mantle of her kindliness.

Her little hand held the rail before me, and I could put my hand over hers, in saying "Baby, baby, baby." That was her name in my heart.

As we went together like this I searched for the words in which to frame my love; and when I found them, she answered with a silence, and downcast eyes. Then I loved her.

When the journey was ended, these recollections were stored up, like the honey that the bees carry home from their visits across the flower gardens.

I went away on my own road, but I was not alone. For all my thoughts were answered out of her breast. And the flowers of poetry sprang up, when I thought of her eyes, her lips, and the sweet tones of her voice.

. . . . . .

All the pealing laughter is done with. All the wicked

sounds that she made with her rosy mouth, and the tapping of the small feet on the ground.

There is a silence like the grave. The noise of trams sometimes runs across this desert of silence, and subsides and passes, leaving a chill and a threat and a menace in the air. To-day she passed me in the street—without saying a word.

. . . . . .

"Zut, Zut! Ca me barbe!" she would say! And she blew three puffs of cigarette smoke into the air, and tapped with her little feet on the ground.

. . . . . .

THE CAT AND THE APRON.

Miss Peyter is right in a great many things, and I go blundering, thinking she is wrong, and she has a clearer vision than I have and treads softer and speaks more low.

There are many people who think that facts are worth little, and that the fictions compiled by the imagination are worth all the actual events of life put together.

I cannot agree with them.

. . . . . .

I see a twilight scene, but I see it with difficulty.

It is high up over one of those enclosed courtyards that the French love for their solitude and their silence. It is Sunday afternoon, and the hour is about 4.30 or 5 p.m.

Yes, I should say only 4.30. I see that there is a room and a girl is lying, dressed, in the half darkness, on a basket-work chair by the window.

How lofty is this window, far up above the world, like an eagle's eerie, perched on a misty rock which the clouds almost kiss.

This woman is a great and beautiful sight. She is only twenty-three years of age, and she lies there by the window like a flower that the master gardener has had in his basket, because it was so beautiful. Yet his girl is more than all the town that lies down below and around and outside this quiet courtyard.

It was, one might say, for her that this town was built and that the world was made.

To carry her, clever engineers made the steamboats that ply on the river and the trains that run under the earth.

All the roads in the world lead to this quiet courtyard.

For her the great markets were built, that she might have the fruit of distant countries and taste the great oranges of Seville and the nectarines of Italy.

The crowd, all jostling together, are making way at this moment for someone who comes to see her.

. . . . . .

He comes in haste, as one who is late and must catch a train. His plans are all made and he carries with him the implements of warfare—a cat in a basket; a piece of lovely music, about one who offered her eyes that her blind lover might see. His pockets are bulging with other things. He has a paintbox and newspapers, and so on. But he has no peace of mind. He is prepared to act, but all his implements cause him intense anxiety. The cat escapes from the basket in the train.

As his mind was engaged upon other thoughts there was nothing very comical in this incident. It seemed to him that all these events were overweighted with real tragedy.

No doubt at the bottom of his heart he saw the real goal of all true existence—a friendship suddenly mellowed into something of a thousand changing colours—call it love—call it what you like.

But he was intensely annoyed because his real, deep feelings were disturbed at every step by the necessity of buying tickets, taking cabs, looking hurriedly and feverishly at clocks, and holding the lid of the basket tight so that the cat should not escape.

Moreover, accustomed in an hour of a great upheaval of the soul (where all those absurd things were really only the froth on the surface of a maelstrom of surging waters) to scan the faces of the people who passed in such thick clouds before him, he was terribly and painfully aware once or twice that a woman's eye was dwelling upon him in a sort of quiet surprise which came perilously near pity—such a look as one would give to something or somebody who was attempting to descend the side of a mountain, unaware that a hideous precipice was awaiting him a few steps away.

But then again he would see the eyes of some woman downcast; and he thought: I shall gain my desire, for she is blushing.

All this time the cat was struggling and meowing in the basket.

Sometimes the whole of its head escaped from one corner of the basket; sometimes its two white paws protruded and the claws clutched frantically at the air.

It was hot and crowded in the Metropolitan.

This man went on to meet his fate.

But as he did not know what fate it would be, he naturally just hoped for the best.

. . . . . .

He could not see what I see now—the quiet room high up, with the girl lying by the window, far up above the courtyard.

It is almost dark in that room. Twilight is coming fast.

The people have forgotten the day. They are beginning to wake to the joy of the evening and of the night.

This man did arrive at last.

But nothing happened.

The hours went by; the clocks tricked and it grew still darker.

When he got back to his office to work that evening it struck him that it was the chance of a life-time, and he went into a cupboard, where a dark blue apron that she wears sometimes in the office, hangs on a peg.

Its upper rim, which encircles her waist, has all sorts of colours in silk worked into it. But the other part of the apron is dark blue—a sort of peacock blue—with the bright colours all confined to the waistband.

This man, who had been in such a hurry, and who was now entirely alone in the office, took this apron in his hands and pressed it hard against his face. He kisses it and even bit it.

His heart was broken, because she was far away.

THE MEETING OF THE WATERS.

I stood to-night by a place where the waters meet, in a turn of the river.

I have stood there before; but never so musically did the waters run as to-night, where they came to clasp their white frothy hands, in whisperings and troubled silences, flowing over each other and under each other.

Some of the waters of the river come down from the mountain by one side and some by another; and they meet here below in the valley under the trees. And they cross over and under, full of whisperings and talkings and sudden outbursts of laughter.

To-night, at twilight, as I stood there I saw the stepping-stones, some bare and dry and others wet with the flowing of the waters, and a girl came down under the trees on the bank of the further side and she sang aloud, like a lark sings to itself: "How beautiful it is, the meeting of the waters!"

But there came an echo to her voice above the murmuring of the river. And from the opposite side of the river a man stepped forth on the stepping-stones and the maiden went forward over the stepping-stones to meet him.

And when he came to the middle of the river, where all the little waves of the meeting waters laughed wildly together, he took her hands and led her back by the way he came.

Then I heard, even further and further away, the sound of their voices, like echoes coming from the leafy solitudes:

"How beautiful it is—the meeting of the waters!"

And where the waters met all was silent again, save the whispering and the laughing of the waves.

Only away in the woods two, who had gone out to meet one another on the stepping-stones, were alone in their joy.

. . . . . .

Who is it that took away my violets?

Did a passer-by brush them from my hand, or did I give them to somebody in the street, or did a policeman take them from me? They are gone, my beautiful violets. Who is it that took them away?

And I heard the violets cry out:

"We are in her bosom!"

BABY PEYTER.

May 12, 1910.

O, Baby, why have I wandered so far away and become so wild—
If you hear a tap on the window-pane it's only a little child
Come back with torn and bleeding feet to kneel at your side and pray:
"Forgive us as we forgive them, and give us our daily bread this day!"

And what I have seen on the mountain-side let no man ask me more—
Sing me, darling, the song you sang so sweet in the days of yore.
Out of the storm and thunder I climb to your quiet nest—
You can heal the worst of my woes, Baby, by the thoughts from your gentle breast.

CHAPTER XII.

A PROPOS OF DUELLING.

One day, when the "American Register" was still being run by Count Hamon, and when geraniums and azaleas made a glorious show in the flower-boxes o the fourteen windows of the banking department at 8, Place de l'Opéra —the days when Baby Peyter* was queen of all hearts, and Logue was our nursery gardener—when the Penn Wyoming Copper Company was flourishing like a green bay tree, and Hayden the shaven-headed Garçon-de-Bureau, talked hopefully of realising on his sandy property somewhere in Australia . . . I sat down and wrote my weekly article called "News of the Week in Paris," which generally filled the first two columns of the front page of our celebrated journal hebdomadaire. Anyone who takes the trouble to look up this last delightful French word in the dictionary will find that it has nothing to do with our old friend the dromedary, but means on the contrary, "weekly" newspaper.

This week I chose for my subject an article written by Henri Rochefort for the current number of the "Intransigeant."

I had had my eye for some time past on the conspicuous figure of Henri Rochefort, that unrivalled and brilliant pamphleteer, whose name on the title page of any Parisian journal is a guarantee of quadrupled circulation.

A man of undaunted personal courage, the fearless champion of every down-trodden race, he stands out a towering political figure above the mass of present-day mediocrity. His dome-like forehead, splendid leonine locks and piercing eyes have been magnificently perpetuated in the celebrated portrait by Marcel Baschet, which was hung in the Salon of 1908.

Exiled from France for political reasons which redound to his credit, M. Henri Rochefort resided for a period of six years in England, where he was welcomed by the highest in the land. Perfectly acquainted with all our English

* See Chapter XI.; "The Light that Failed."

institutions, he brings to bear upon the daily article which he writes for his paper "La Patrie" a full comprehension of international politics and a deep insight into the intricate details of diplomacy which are denied to many statesmen.

If, in the course of his active and eventful life, Henri Rochefort has occasionally laid down his pen, it has generally been to take up his sword, in order that he might defend his written statements. A splendid type of the journalist of the old school, this distinguished Frenchman has in the course of his lifetime fought over fifty duels.

The articles daily signed by his name, which rain like thunderbolts from his pen, are rather to be qualified as manifestations of the irresistible forces of Nature, than mere emanations from a human brain.

My remarks regarding this gentleman were duly printed in the "American Register" Paris edition, and attracted the attention of Henri Rochefort, who was then leader-writer of the "Intransigeant" newspaper in Paris. It appears that Rochefort was strolling through the Chambre des Députiés, when a friend called his attention to my article. He instantly threatened to send his seconds up to Count Hamon, the then proprietor of the "American Register." Count Hamon reported the matter to me, saying that I must take care what I wrote, as he might have had to fight a duel over this matter. I replied: "Thank you, sir. If you will allow me to defend my own article, I shall be very pleased to do so. A duel with Henri Rochefort would certainly be a new experience, and I am quite prepared to meet this man, who wishes to fight with everybody!"

"Oh!" replied Count Hamon, with a laugh in his voice, "M. Rochefort would not fight with you! He would challenge me, because I am the proprietor of the journal."

There is no doubt that Count Hamon made a great mistake in not arranging this duel, for the various business speculations of his banking concern were just then in a critical state and the noise which would have been made around a duel with such a personality as Henri Rochefort would have constituted a magnificent advertisement for his house and might have effectually restored the failing fortunes of "Hamon and Compaigne." Two or three years later the bank at 8, Place de l'Opéra fell under a shadow, and its collapse is a matter of public notoriety. The geraniums and azaleas disappeared from the window-boxes. Baby Peyter and Logue and all of us were swept away. The electric-lit sign became extinguished, the furniture was sold, and even Hayden may now be met wandering workless on the boulevards.

I now reproduce the article which I wrote for the "American Register":

Article printed in the "American Register" of Sunday, December 30, 1906, to which M. Rochefort took exception, entitled

"NEWS OF THE WEEK IN PARIS."

"A very clever article by that fanatic thrower of thunderbolts, Henri Rochefort, appeared in last Saturday's number of the paper he controls. This man, who has travelled all over the world, seems to make his soul the harbouring place for every bitterness and animosity that politics can excuse or indigestion cause. Yet occasionally, strange to say, he turns his envenomed pen from some human target and sits down to talk sense. Then he is at his best, and shows a wide and philosophical temperament. His scope of vision seems to expand, and he takes the sane and practical point of view of the historian or the sage. In his article in the 'Intransigeant' with regard to the Channel Tunnel he says that he is convinced that this project will never become a reality, and he quotes the words of Mr. Cavendish-Bentinck, whom he once met when on a visit to England, and who, in answer to M. Rochefort's question concerning the probability of such a tunnel being ever bored, replied: 'We are separated from the rest of Europe by our silver girdle, the sea, and we shall certainly never relinquish this defence.'

"M. Rochefort argues that those among the French who are sanguine about the ultimate construction of the tunnel have never lived in London, and do not appreciate the immense difference between that capital and Paris. He says that the whole spirit of London revolts against the idea of an invasion of that capital by thousands of French unemployed, clerks, mechanics, etc., who would then find it such an easy matter to reach London in a few hours' railway journey. The English workmen, finding themselves the victim of this invasion, would be the first to resent it. Already, says M. Rochefort, the Germans have created for themselves a bad name in London by their readiness to undersell Englishmen in offices and workshops," etc., etc. (The article continues for a column or so on other matters not affecting Henri Rochefort, and is signed "E. B. P." At that time I was not permitted to sign my full name under these articles.)

(Printed in the "American Register," August 19, 1906.)

Some may remember the incident related in one of Dumas' works, where two brilliant swordsmen who had been acting as seconds for a friend were returning home on foot. The path led them through a forest, and they presently came upon an open clearing where a stretch of turf, perfectly level, seemed specially designed for the purpose of tempting them to a little sword practice. The light was perfect; the scene was tranquil. Instinctively they both drew their swords, and with the exquisite skill of fence which belonged to the period they passed half an hour of breathless happiness on the sward. At last, carried away by his enthusiasm, one of the swordsmen so far forgot the playful nature of the encounter as to deal the other a death-blow. Carrying his friend away in his arms he gave him a decent burial in the depths of the forest, and was overwhelmed with remorse when he remembered that owing to the absence of seconds the duel had been unconstitutional.

. . . . . .

One finds in the record of French duelling the horrible account of the two men who hired a cab and having given instructions to the driver to drive rapidly and continuously round a certain route pulled the blinds down and commenced to attack one another with daggers. The left arm of each man was bound to his side. In his right hand he clutched the weapon. At length the cab came to a standstill. The doors were opened and both men were found dead inside.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE "HERALD" OFFICE.

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing!"

I should like just to write a few lines about the "Herald" offices in Paris, especially the night staff down at the Rue du Louvre.

I am going to convey exact impressions, not nasty insinuations.

I am not one of those journalists who consider it necessary to bite the hand that feeds them.

When first I heard of the "New York Herald" in Paris I thought to myself: "This is one of those rotten American papers, transported into Paris, where it is not fit to exist amidst the high-class journalism which exists in French. Enormous sensational headlines, false news, contradictions, absence of literary articles, the mere bald, yellow-bearded journalism of the Yankee!

Then someone told me that the night staff of the "Herald" had to work awfuly hard, so I didn't take any more trouble about getting on it. I contented myself with reading the Saturday edition of the "Figaro," with the literary supplement, and every day the "Le Journal," with its marvellous "Contes," written by French masters of the art of prose.

Now and again I picked up the coloured Sunday supplement of the "Herald" and shed tears of mirth over the antics of Buster Brown, the follies of the Tiny Tads, the eccentricities of Fluffy Ruffles, and the magnificent panorama of experiences through which passes, always with beaucoup d'esprit, our friend Little Nemo.

Apart from that I rather damned the "Herald."

They had never replied to my letters making application for a post on the staff, and I was fairly happy up on the "American Register" till I finished my engagement, went to St. Malo for my holiday, and, returning, found it an urgent matter to become a paid member of some work-giving institution.

In an evil hour (as Frost would say) I met Miss Hill—charming girl—French or English, whichever way you like to take her. Third one of the kind I have met in Paris.

Mademoiselle said there was no place vacant on the "Evening Standard." She was doing secretarial work up there for "Percival" (Raphael) and knew all about it.

But why didn't I try the "Herald"?

Well, of course, on her recommendation I thought it was a great thing. She was all alone up there. And I found it the hardest possible thing to talk business seriously. Wonderful taste Raphael has in girls. All his lady secretaries seem alike. Perfect blossoms, chock full of independence, wit, and learning. Mother of this girl, on the one side English. Father, French—speaks either language like a native. Takes both down rapidly in shorthand.

She said: "You meet these 'Herald' people in the cafés, you know. So go and get a job there, like that."

So I went down to St. Malo.

On my return I called in the Rue du Louvre and saw Smith.

Curious thing, but I always thought Smith was the editor-in-charge! He used to come out to see me in his shirt-sleeves. I could almost hear the rushing and tearing rattle of the linotype machines in the printing room beyond, but that was forbidden ground.

Smith was so huge—being Scotch—they call him Garden instead of Gordon Smith—a few letters make all the difference, as the woman said in the breach of promise action. Smith was strong, large, and influential-looking without being ponderous, so I went for him bald-headed.

And why not? He had been fifteen years with the "Herald" and I had no doubt he was the man who could give me a place.

I told him I knew the artists in the Latin Quarter and that I could give him right off a column of names of well-known French and American artists and where they happened to be "passing" at that moment their summer holidays, and why they had chosen that particular place.

"You can try it," said Smith.

The door of the Rue du Louvre office shut with a snap. The die was cast and the article written.

It went like hot cakes.

In addition to this I called every day at 104, Avenue des Champs Elysées, about 8.30, 9, or 10 a.m. to see James Gordon Bennett, but I only saw his owls. There were owls everywhere, throughout his magnificent apartment.

Two of them, with electric-lit eyes, looked down at you at night from the top of a book-case. The long curved arms of the chairs in the hall, tapered up like the sides of rocking chairs, and ended in wooden owls.

Every day I called at this abode of wisdom, I was dressed in my very best—white waistcoat, gold chain, buttonhole, and carried sketches to show the Commodore my prowess in the art of illustration.

Sometimes, on my way up the Champs Elysées, I would meet Burlingham, a philosopher, who said to me:

"You will never see the Commodore unless you get an appointment. But you can keep on trying for all that; because he is the only man who can give you a position in the office. Try sending him a pneumatic."

The pneumatic was duly sent, and I got a reply from Mr. Bennett next day, saying there was no vacancy on the staff, but he hoped I would subscribe art notes from the Latin Quarter, for which I should be paid regular space rates.

A week later, however, I was down at the Rue du Louvre, when the editor-in-charge came out to speak to me, and said he had had a telephone message from the Commodore that afternoon and that I was to be given a week's trial on the night staff at Frs.125 per week as salary.

Credit went up all round. I got a lot of stuff printed, which was all paid extra to my editorial work. For two months I worked at the table from eight p.m. till three a.m. (when they go to press) in the Rue du Louvre, in the excellent company of Frost, Smith, Gribble, Parslow, Fougner, O'Connor and others, including a French garçon-de-bureau called Fatty, who fetched us what we wanted in the way of pads to write on, encyclopaedias, French and English dictionaries, the Nobility and Gentry, and so on.

A most amusing office. Everybody swears fit to shake the walls down. But hard work all the time. No one leaves the office between the hours of 8 p.m. and 3 a.m. A boy goes out at 10 p.m. and again at 12 midnight to fetch in drinks and sandwiches if you order them.

Parslow has bottles of wine and Vichy water and nuts and bags of fruit, etc., spread all round his part of the table —like a fortification to prevent the editor-in-charge from seeing whether he is asleep, or from following too closely the details of his method of work.

Frost snores again and again. "Wake up, Frost!" roars the editor-in-charge. But I can answer for it that Frost's pen never stopped writing when he was asleep. I was next to him, so I saw. The only difference was that his pen wrote strange and unintelligible hieroglyphics during its master's sleep, which had to be corrected when the latter woke.

Perhaps I might here quote an angelic song which was composed for the "Livre d'Or" by the Poet Laureate of the

office. In this song one is supposed to hear the editor-in-charge issuing his directions to the individual members of the night staff:

STEVENSON'S SONG.

Now, gents, I want some copy, quick, so push the stuff along.
Well, what's the matter, Parslow, have you struck a something wrong?
The office-boy will pass the blood-red Gotha if you shout,
But if you cannot verify—well, simply cut it out.
Say, Gribble, get a move on; I've a Webster here for you.
O, Frost don't go to sleep just yet, there's lots of work to do—
You're not asleep? Why, dash you, I distinctly heard you snore;
Come, let me have that copy, for I can't wait any more.
How goes it, Fougner, eh? Ca biche? (A voice responded, "Fine.")
Why won't you blot your copy, Frost, you—(phrase that ends in "swine").
No, Gribble, no; we do not "lunch" upon the Continent;
No, sir, you did not alter it, though such was your intent.
O'Connor, please remember this: we "stop," we do not stay.
Tiens, Frost; what was that monosyllable I heard you say:
You're making sense of Stanhope? Well, you have a good excuse,
So open wide the safety valve and let off some abuse.
We "pass" our time, we do not "spend"; I've mentioned that before.
Say, Smith, you've been a "Herald" man for fourteen years or more,
And yet you let "His Royal Highness" every time go through,
And not a slip is numbered—oh, you are a corker, you!!
On sonne! On sonne, you something swine. Where's Fatty gone to now?
He moves about as quickly as a paralytic cow.
What's this? more copy? Oh, my God! The make-up's gone to hell,
And where we're going to put the stuff I'm d——d if I can tell.
So hustle, everybody, look, it's nearly half-past two,
And, Bingham, shout for help if you have more than you can do. . . .

(Exit suddenly into the composing room.)

I suppose if you come to think of it, it is because there

are such men as the editor-in-charge that the world keeps alive at all.

He drove us like a team-master drives his team over rough ground—with a frolicking song for all, a touch here and there of the whip for the lazy ones—and so the great paper came out at 3.30 and we went home to our beds in the dawn.

. . . . . .

A brief explanation as to the instructions contained in this song. The word "spend" is taboo on the "Herald." You must say "pass" instead. So-and-so is "passing" his honeymoon, or "passing" his holidays.

The word "stay" is taboo. You must say "stopping" at an hotel, not staying. Sort of faint allusion to a pair of lady's is, I suppose, objected to.

The word "rich" is tabo. You must never say a "rich," always a "wealthy" American.

The word "motor-car" is taboo. Use the word "automobile" instead.

"Lift" is taboo. Use the word "elevator" instead.

"Breakfast." Bar that word on the Continent and say always "déjeuner."

"Late" (as "late President," etc.) is taboo. Use the word "Ex." Thus: "Ex-convict," "Ex-President."

"Goods train," taboo. Use "freight train" instead.

Never use the word "lady." Say invariably "woman," and thus avoid odious comparisons.

"Sail," as far as ships are concerned, is taboo. Ships don't sail. They "steam." ("What does a balloon do?" asked Frost one day.)

. . . . . .

REBELLIOUS THUNDER CONTRADICTS "HERALD'S" WEATHER PROPHET.

Nature Revolts as Premature Barometer Readings.

I have omitted to mention one of the most amusing things in connection with the "Herald." That is, the Weather Service. This is arranged on a very exacting footing, as Mr. Bennett considers himself an authority on weather and likes to make, as the French say, "La pluie et le beau temps."

I shall never forget Stevenson reading aloud to us one night one of those remarkable documents that came down by special messenger from the Champs Elysées while we were all seated round the table.

The usual rush was going on, the cable machines were ticking, Smith was struggling with a finicking fashion article—he wore that "up against it" expression which I have

hit off to a tee in the accompanying sketch; Fougner was editing Pierre Veber's dramatic critique on a first-night at the Bouffes Parisienne, and things were generally humming when:

"Now, gents, silence all, please!" rang out the voice of S—v—n, "while I read you the Commodore's latest:

"In to-day's paper it was stated that the barometer was rising, and the weather was unsettled. What does this mean? With a rising barometer I will have fine weather!"

A roar of laughter went up. And Fougner, whose turn it was to write Paris weather that night, went out with a grim, determined look, and "took a turn round the block," as the "Herald" saying has it, to see the sky at midnight. On his return he wrote, as usual, the following portentous words:

"At three o'clock this morning the sky was clear. The day had been hot, and night brought no cooling breeze."

That was written at midnight; but the "Herald" prophet always assumes that there will be no change in the weather between 12 and 3 a.m.

The words were duly set up in type and printed.

But lo! at 3 a.m. a curious sound was heard upon the roofs and windows of the editorial den.

Can that be rain?

Fougner shuddered visibly.

It was not only rain. A peal of thunder rent the air. Gigantic swords of lightning flashed across Paris. The dead must have been awakened in their graves.

But note the majesty and power of the Press.

Astonished Parisians and others who had been awakened in the night by the deluge, read in their favourite American paper that:

"At three o'clock this morning the sky was clear. Night brought no cooling breeze."

Strangest of all, the Commodore never spotted it and Fougner lived to thank his lucky stars!

. . . . . .

It seems that the American First Nighter, who was formerly one of us in Paris, is now getting popular in London. This is a sound, tall, hearty American man who, formerly, I believe, brought out the Sunday edition of the "Herald" (some 100 odd pages) in America. He used to come in to our Paris office with his copy at night-time, and sometimes sat down at the table with us and wrote out his stuff and put a seven-head to it, with the rapidity and precision of an expert Yankee journalist, who can fit a starting cap ("cha-

peau," as the French call it) to the dullest story in the world. He wolud call for a bottle of beer and ignoring a glass "drink from the fountain source" like one inspired.

Some of his best work was contributed gratis to the "Open Letter" column. "That's the proper spirit!" sang out the editor-in-charge, when this great muscular man swang into the office at midnight and flung down two or three sheets of "Open Letter" column copy signed with the mystic "Manhattan."

And now he has crossed the Channel and sends in regularly tons of cable over the name of "American First Nighter"—that name before which the "Long-haired London critics" tremble and perspire.

DEDICATED TO BUSTER BROWN.

Lud! I am tired. Pass me the comic section of the "New York Herald." Buster Brown is up in a balloon this week. God bless his happy soul. Tige is winking like fun.

It had to do with a fireman last week, who said he was hoping that rain—or something would come down to cool the weather a bit. It was Buster Brown who came down the sliding pole on his head just at that moment.

Buster is too young to be punished by the police. Besides, he can run so fast. Even Tige is sometimes surprised at the way Buster can run when circumstances force him to it.

Buster is, in American language, "a sport." He never runs till after the event. But then he runs real fast. You see he has to get home quick, before he forgets the thoughts that he wants to write down on that blackboard which contains the summary and conclusions drawn from the event.

Of course Tige can run fast too. But that is natural to him. How is it that little Buster can possibly keep up, and even out-distance him?

My friends, the truth is that Buster is no ordinary child. If he were, he would have been killed long ago by one of the fool-men he has made fun of.

Buster Brown is a living example of bounce and go, and Tige is always there too, like a faithful Boswell, following after his juvenile Johnson.

I am so awfully glad to see, as week succeeds week, that Buster grows no older. It would be such a calamity, a public calamity, if Buster grew up and got wise and stupid and became a rich oil or steel or pork king or something. Tige would never be able to bear it. It is that young Buster that we all love. Because we were young once and we would

have been glad to do all the wicked things Buster did, if we only had a chance.

All the world would rise up as one man if anyone tried to lay hands on Buster. But Tige is looking after that.

"Who is this Bennett?" said a Frenchman to me the other night, while we were sipping our benedictine after dinner in the Café de Paris.

"Why," I answered, "the man who left a thousand-franc note on the table in this very restaurant as a tip for the waiter. Only one out of thousands of similar freaks invented by his fertile imagination as an advertisement for his widely-read newspaper."

This, also, is the newspaper proprietor who rewards his contributors for any specially brilliant "coup" or for any article which takes his fancy as being worthy of commendation, by sending them a free order to go and get a suit of clothes at his own tailors. This explains how Oppler met a Berlin correspondent of the "Herald" who was not remarkable for his personal appearance and the cut of his clothes, arrayed suddenly in faultless evening dress one night in the Hotel Bristol: black braid down trousers, miles and miles of black silk, against which flashed by contrast the brilliant diamonds (?) on his shirt-front. "What's up, old man?" said Oppler.

"Had a letter from Bennett with order to visit his tailor—acknowledgment of my article on "Germany's Foreign Policy"—so I just went along and got decked out like this."

But another man, who was in Paris at the time when he received a similar mark of favour, was less easy to please. He had written something very good for the paper and when he received notice of his reward he regarded it as an insult. He happened to be in no need of new clothes at the moment, even those bearing the hall-mark of accurate cut afforded by Bennett's private tailor. But he also happened to know a number of hard-up impecunious students who were friends of his in the Latin Quarter. To each of these he gave the address of Bennett's tailor, saying: "Go along there and order a good pair of trousers."

Bennett received the bill for about twenty pair of trousers. "What!" he cried, "is this man then a centipede!"

But the truth leaked out and the clever writer was asked to send in his resignation, which he willingly did, having anticipated this request.

This is also the man who calls all his foreign correspondents by the parts of a dog's body. The Berlin correspondent received invariably telegrams from Bennet addressed

"Dog's Tail, Berlin." The Norwegian correspondent is "Dog's Leg," the London correspondent, "Dog's Eye," etc.

. . . . . .

And who that has lived in Paris has not heard of Bennett's owls? I have at home envelopes from the man bearing every description of owl as crest, and very pretty ones too. This is a pleasant enough conceit and one in which I find myself entirely "d'accord" with this stern, dyspeptic man, for my grandfather's crest is an owl and the Witten family are inscribed in the heraldry book under this crest.

The gold owl on Bennett's large blue envelopes, which he uses when returning articles to you, is a majestic bird in every sense. Standing clear forth from the surface of the paper, it is as fine as a setting sun on a black-clouded horizon.

The owl is his favourite amongst all birds.

. . . . . .

This also is the man who, finding that the fast 11 o'clock train from Paris to Trouville was discontinued by the railway authorities, owing to small receipts, profits not being sufficient to warrant the running of this particular train, offered to pay the difference on days when the company lost by the running of the empty train, so that he himself, who was fond of going to the Trouville races, might have his favourite train down there when he wanted it, because he hated getting up early to catch the 7.30 a.m. The fast train, therefore, continued to run the same as usual, though Bennett was sometimes the only passenger. An example of lordly egotism and contempt of economy which is worthy of remark by those afflicted with miserly instincts.

Damn the expense!

. . . . . .

This is the man who sent a wire to a New York journalist of note, who, feeling himself summoned by the irresistible force and magnetism of Bennett's almighty dollar, left his happy home, crushing two collars hastily into a canvas bag, and fled for Europe.

"Come over into Europe and see me," said the telegram! What magic promise, what dazzling hopes of preferment were not contained in these simple but sweeping words!

Throughout the journey and while the cradle of the deep rocked the mighty thousand-tonner, and the many horse-powered engines of the twin-screw leviathan rattled and sang, one phrase only echoed through the mind of the jour-

nalist. He read and re-read the telegram received from Bennett, dated Avenue des Champs Elysées, Paris.

At last the great ship arrived, and in due course the journalist landed in Europe and reached the Paris platform.

No taximétre could quickly enough convey him towards the Arc de Triomphe. However, when he called at the house, he was informed that Mr. Bennett was out, or otherwise invisible.

He went and fixed up at an hotel and there remained.

Time passed. Day after day he called, in irreproachable attire, and asked to see Mr. Bennett, sending up his brand-new cards. But Mr. Bennett was strictly invisible.

At last, one day three weeks later, he was shown into the sacred presence. He stood, hat in hand, while the proprietor of the great newspaper never even looked up from his writing. At length said Bennett:

"What are you doing here?"

"I came in answer to your telegram," said the journalist, showing the identical missive.

"Waal, you'd just better go back again, I reckon," replied the autocrat.

And back the journalist went.

No doubt his expenses were paid from the Paris office. But the occasion had passed for his services, or Bennett had forgotten the reason of his summons. It was not for him to enter into explanations with a subordinate from the other side of the herring-pond!

. . . . . .

Even dear old Oppler of Berlin had a similar experience. Wire arrives, "Come and see me in Paris." Arrival of Oppler. Delayed interview, but finally Oppler gets into the presence. He, having been correspondent for the "Herald" for many years, takes the liberty of sitting down while Bennett continues writing, without even lifting his head.

At last he looks up. "Ah, it's you! Tell me in a word the political situation in Germany."

Oppler, perfectly versed, spouts it all like a lesson.

"Right, that will do," interrupts the autocrat. "You can draw your expenses and go back. Pass another week in Paris, first, if you like."

Charming situation of Oppler. All ended happily. He could have equally written in a few pages and posted the remarks he had just been called upon to make.

. . . . . .

Lastly, and with emphasis, this is the man who, finding Montesquiue, ancient outside editor of the "Herald," sitting

scribbling out his article alone in the Rue du Louvre editorial offices of the Continental edition of the "New York Herald" one afternoon——No! I can't end that sentence! Let's begin again:

One afternoon Mr. James Gordon Bennett took it into his head to pay one of his rare visits to the Rue du Louvre editorial offices of the Continental edition of the "New York Herald" (that gets it).* And finding an unknown man sitting inside all alone scribbling an article on the sacred editorial table, Bennett, who was certainly "ripe," as the French say, if not actually feeling "rotten"—Bennett demanded at once, in stentorian tones: "And who the devil are you?"

The unfortunate Montesquieu, never having seen the proprietor of the "Herald" and not recognising his august majesty, instantly replied (annoyed at being interrupted in his labours):

"And who the devil are you?"

Snatching a large ink-pot from the table, Mr. Bennett, without adding a word of explanation, flung it at the head of his unfortunate sub-editor, whom he evidently regarded as an impertinent intruder, a rank outsider, a man searching domicile—a person sheltering himself from the storm and the rain—in a word—an impostor lacking habitation and a "loque humaine."

The ink-pot flew, thus far doing its duty and obeying the immutable laws of motion—which is a paradox—but the worthy missile missed its mark and went flying through the office window and struck full on the noble head of a slumbering cocher, whose cab was drawn up just outside the "Herald" offices in the Rue des Deux Ecus!

Waking instantly from his agreeable torpor, the purple-faced Jehu clambered hastily from his box and, rushing into the offices of the "Herald," his head streaming with ink, confronted in all his burlesque wrath the two men who were disputing their identity vigorously enough in the interior of the office.

Montesquieu, seeing this inky apparition rush—surgir—upon the scene, simply pointed to Bennett, yelled at the cocher: "There's the man who did it," and, turning, fled, leaving Mr. Benett alone with that weird representative of labour and democracy, the ink-stained cocher.

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* Serious interruption! "Le nommé" Parslow arrives at this moment to say that this is all wrong. That the incident happened long before the Rue du Louvre offices existed. That it took place in the Avenue de l'Opéra office of the "Herald," and that the man concerned was not an outside editor of the "Herald" at all. What does it matter? Get out, Parslow!

Capital faced labour; but the language of the cocher proved victorious. Pouring out an uninterrupted stream of such expressions as only a cocher knows how to make use of, the good man, not listening to Mr. Bennett's explanations and not seeing in him anything else than the offender who had thrown the ink-pot, not recognising his title as proprietor nor any other of his claims to indulgence, demanded instant pecuniary satisfaction for ink-stains and a bruised forehead. Mr. Bennett settled the matter handsomely and the coachman, pocketing a bank-note, went off well satisfied with his afternoon's work!

TWILIGHT SICKNESS.*

O, if I could be ill,
To lie quite still and still
In a room filled with sweet flowers—
To hear a grandfather's clock
Ticking with slow, wise knock
And chiming the hours.

Oh, if I could be ill
And forget all the years and their sorrow—
Have no thought for the past
Nor care too much for the morrow.
Only to lie quite still
With the pillows under my head,
And Nurse, like a silent shadow in white,
In her chair at the foot of my bed.

* The above poem, previously to its publication in the "New York" Herald," passed through the hands of the proprietor of that paper, Mr. Gordon Bennett, who christened it "That Tired Feeling," and, said he, "Let all the sub-editors in the Rue du Louvre know, that I won't have them any longer plead sickness as an excuse for absence without a doctor's certificate." Simultaneously with the publication of my poem, therefore, began the inauguration of a Reign of Terror in the "Herald" Paris office, during which a terrible fine of Frs.20 was inflicted upon every sub-editor who arrived at the Rue du Louvre Offices after the stroke of 8 p.m. Ask Parslow for full details. These fines accumulated from day to day, as he was almost invariably late, crushed him; and in the accompanying illustration we see him pushing his furniture towards the Mont de Piété, so that he may raise sufficient money to pay his fines.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE COMING OF OPPLER.

Just a word, kind friends, about that lump of well-dressed humanity called Oppler.

His advent to Paris was a marvellous throwing out and disordering of all the systems. Nature stared aghast to see this portly man torn from his favourite table in the Hotel Bristol (Berlin) and chucked down among the night staff ("those kids," he called them) in the editor's room of the "Herald."

He seemed a gentlemanly fellow, too, when first I was introduced to him.

I was swotting away editing Capel Court and Wall Street Markets—to say nothing of the Paris Bourse in French, and tons of "Little News Notes" from the "Figaro," "Petit Parisien," etc., next to Frost, who was sleeping behind his spike—a very insufficient protection from the eagle eye of the editor-in-charge.

Oppler came in, and was introduced to all of us one by one, and sat down at the table.

His handwriting, to begin with, was admirable. I was astonished to see a foreign correspondent for a great newspaper write with so admirable a precision, and in such an elegant hand.

Oppler told me afterwards that he was all shaken up, having had to leave Berlin on a sudden summons from the proprietor of the "Herald" and would I show him an hotel.

Well, of course, I like an intelligent man to ask me this question, because there is only one hotel in Paris that I can recommend, and that is—our Monasterial.

Just look at the photo of our salle-à-manger herewith.

Why, as soon as I take a friend there and he sees the coloured windows looking on the garden, the great vaulted halls and corridors, the sweet serenity and quietude of the whole place, he forgets that I am there, in his hurry to take a room.

"All this suits me exactly," are his first muttered words, after two hours of unpacking.

"Well, then—come down to dinner," said I to Oppler. And he came, in all his war-paint.

A married man—you could tell it at a glance. All his collars the same size and carefully marked with his own name—not like mine—some marked "Farrell" and others which belonged to my brother when his neck was the same size as mine.

Then his shirts. All one colour. Not some blue, others white, the rest pink.

Oppler was given quite a big room; I believe, though I never saw it, on the floor below mine, but he soon moved upstairs to the top floor, because there was a room next to mine. And he said, "I prefer to be next to you. You can run in with some boiled eggs in the morning; and put some 'Tauchnitz' editions in my room, will you, old fellow?"

You see how friendly we were getting.

Why, that poor soul missed his home and his wife and his dogs, here in this great maelstrom of Paris.

And I tell you, friends, when I found the other day a slab of the best butter, wrapped carefully in a drawer of Oppler's empty room—I could scracely throw it away.

We were chums, without a doubt. To begin with, here I had a man evidently accustomed to live well and to mix with the highest Society in Berlin. He was a little exacting always, for he was accustomed to have things of the best, and even in a first-class restaurant here in Paris he would turn crusty and begin to find fault with the service or the food.

The "Herald" had not treated him stingily for the last fifteen years or so that he had acted as their special correspondent at Berlin. He was a perfect library of experiences.

I took him, for preference, down to Establie's Restaurant, in the Rue Bonaparte, just opposite the gates of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. He liked this cheap, Bohemian restaurant as a change from the gaudy, highly-gilt shows. Here he found the real element of Latin Quarter life—free, well-disposed, sociable, and void of bounders. On the walls of the restaurant were some interesting paintings of the Bal de 4-z Arts.

Oppler came in the atelier of the Art School one day, as it was just across the road, and invited the massier and six others out to drink.

He always spent his money freely, gave enormous tips to the poor waiters in this tiny restaurant, and was regarded as a heaven-sent benefactor.

I will simply add that Oppler had (or was supposed by Bennett to have) written something concerning some Prince

in Berlin, which was published in the "Herald" and caused the German Prince annoyance. Oppler told me that he met the Prince, who was a personal friend of his and who said to him right away: "There was no possible harm in what you wrote, my dear Oppler, and we are perfectly good friends."

At any rate Oppler was recalled to Paris by Bennett and told that "he had better undergo a period of training in the Rue du Louvre Editorial Office"—in other words he was committed to prison for correction.

For, indeed, it was nothing more nor less than imprisonment for this man, who came fresh from the liberty of his home in Charlottenberg and had been accustomed to dine night after night with a party of the leading foreign correspondents of the great newspapers.

Transplanted to Paris, Oppler got sick of eight p.m. till three a.m. passed in doing next to nothing in a stuffy room where fourteen others were scribbling as hard as they could go, with beer and wine-bottles stuck in front of them and heaps of cable to edit.

He appeared in my room one night, saying:

"I was away from the office last night, Parsons, and I shan't go down to-night, for really I feel quite queer. These late hours, you know!"

Certainly. And he went back once or twice more and then gave it up.

"I will not sit there," he said.

So we passed one day at Versailles, another in the picture galleries—a night in the Palais de Glace (where we met Gribble, who was with a lady who skated to perfection—admirable it was). Then we went to the Opera.

All this time I was living on my Frs.300 which I had saved up. It slipped away terribly fast, but I saw much that was worth remembering.

I used to worry Oppler terribly. You remember he was in the next room to mine. I was then writing a big article on "Tar Paving" and the scheme for relaying of the boulevards of Paris and the roads in the Bois, and a great International Congress which was being organised by experts in Paris in connection with this question. It was an article that was chucked by the "Herald," but I sold it to a technical paper in London.

In the mornings I used to take this in and read a bit of it to Oppler. One morning, I shall never forget it, I had just carried his boiled eggs and hot milk in and I thought I would skim over the article for him to hear, as he was an expert on "Herald" style.

But the topic of tar-paving was such a dull one, and he had slept so badly that night (he was working till 3 a.m. at the time) that I noticed he was getting fearfully restless, plunging about and tossing from side to side, like a lion just before it is fed.

Being fairly enormous in bulk, I was properly horrified, while in the midst of a very dry passage about the technical method of spreading tar, to see his eye fixed upon me with a ferocious aspect that passes description.

From time to time his enormous fists grasped by handfuls the bedclothes, and he would plunge over on the other side, shaking the whole room.

I never finished reading that article. I judged it not only considerate, but judicious to withdraw, and leave him alone with his hot milk.

You have no idea how a small thing can work upon the nerves after seven hours' toil in the sub-editorial room in the Rue du Louvre.

I annoyed Oppler on another occasion. We went to the Opera, that awful night when he had the hiccups. In a burst of generous enthusiasm while dining the previous night with Blum, the Yankee student—in Establie's Restarant, the Bohemian one—he offered Blum a seat for the following night, but when we went to Versailles for something next day, took déjeuner under the trees there, and French notes were simply melting into thin air.

So we judged it advisable to call it off, so far as a seat for Blum was concerned in the Opera. I paid for my own —it was a fearful fuss—cabs—waiting in cafés and getting change—no good seats left except ten francs apiece, Oppler startled out of his mind, and then subsiding into a sort of angry complaisance—a vexed acquiescence, and sulky resignation.

We had just time to rush down and dine at Establie's and make our excuses to Blum.

As luck would have it Oppler still had the hiccups, and he played them for all they were worth. It was a quiet and determined game.

Blum was there, in what he calls his best. Oppler sat down to dinner, was seized, poor fellow, with an actual spasm of the complaint, told Blum he had quite given up the idea of going to the Opera, and would go home quietly to bed. If Blum lived in our direction, would he accept a lift home in our cab after dinner? "We are going straight to our hotel," added Oppler.

Confound it, these lies are told every day in Society, and

ten francs was a big lump for Oppler to pay out for a man whom he had only met the day before.

As for the offer of a lift home in our cab, naturally Oppler thought it was safe enough to make same, for I had told him that Blum lived right up at Montparnasse in the opposite direction.

But Blum had us on toast. He said: "Thanks! I will come your way. I am going by the Rou Drouot."

It is true he had a friend there, but I think he wanted to know whether we were really going straight home, or whether we were going to slink off to the Opéra on our own.

The cab was hailed. In we got. Dropped Blum corner of Rue Drouot on the Boulevard des Italiens. The damned cocher went down the wrong turning with us, and we had to be seen by Blum, turning round suspiciously soon after he had alighted, but of course we got to the Opera House—brilliant night—Oppler was very satisfied.

He went downstairs between the acts once, and I got sick of waiting for him. The bell rang for the rise of the curtain, and I re-entered our little box, without Oppler.

He certainly was considerably upset when I met him between the next acts. He said to me, "You idiot, I have been all over this damned building hunting for our box, Why did you leave me? I have seen every official in the building——"

He certainly looked hot, like a man who had lost his way in a forest.

But all that was soon forgotten when I showed him the number of our box.

. . . . . .

Oppler was thoroughly good at heart, and actually spoke poetry down at Versailles.

We got locked in the park late at night, watching the reflection of the moon in the long water.

Oppler showed his passport, written in German, I believe, to the officials at the park gates, after dark, and they laughingly let us out, though it was unintelligible to them.

"This is God's own grass down here," said Oppler—"smell it—after that d——d town!" And he pulled up handfuls of the dewy weed.

Paris had taken him under her arm and given him a twirl round in the dance, and he felt a bit giddy.

That hideous Olympia—which is about the only place where you can get a sandwich with a glass of Munich and some music after three in the morning, always turns me up.

But Oppler undoubtedly found a firm friend in Tom the Guide, whose portrait I give here. Sometimes the Berlin correspondent would slip away arm-in-arm with the old soldier, saying:

"Take me to some quiet, small restaurant, Tom—order some decent grub, and let's forget we're in Paris!"

One day, when funds had entirely failed, Oppler went without the sou to visit his friend Kluytmans, who came up to the hotel, and insisted on paying a forty-franc luncheon, and gave me a fine article on his new Dutch dirigible balloon. This article went in the "Herald" with photos.

Then came the day when Oppler had to return to Berlin. Tom made a fearful noise, and came to the station with us in a cab, smelling of rhum-eau-de-seltz.

I am sure that Oppler had tipped him handsomely.

And so this great, good-natured man went back to Berlin, his wife, and his dogs.

CHAPTER XV.

THE BISHOP.

"Soup, potatoes, cocoa, toast,
And flannel next your skin."

My eldest sister, impregnated with the routine of the rectory, always expressed the formula of our home life in the above couplet, and I thought it rather clever in its conciseness.

The more pity that I never hear from Ella now—fallen a prey, perhaps, to some religious or anti-religious sect which forbids the exchange of letters between blood-relations.

It's rather a blessing in disguise, for letter-writing these days is a sad tyranny.

What she meant to say was that at supper in the Rectory at North Waltham, where my father looked after the spiritual needs of the village for fourteen happy years, the menu on the kitchen slate for supper was generally the same (there's my hot milk boiling over in the monasterial room) —the same, and consisted of soup, with potatoes, then cocoa with toast, and father always advocated, I suppose, the wearing of flannel next your skin.

So when I went to Paris, and just at the time when I was working on the night staff of the "New York Herald" (Continental Edition), Parslow got wind of the fact that Bishop Ormsby had arrived to take over the charge of the English church in the Rue d'Aguesseau. I had known for months before that a clergyman of the name of Ormsby was coming to replace the Rev. Dr. Noyes. I was then working for the "American Register," and the idea struck me that very probably Bishop Ormsby was the Rev. Ormsby I had known years before at Chislehurst, where my aunt lives.

I thought to myself "All my difficulties are over now. Here is my old, staunch friend, that erratic Irishman, Ormsby, coming with his delicate wife and seven children, including the one who wears spectacles, and, of course, Mr. Ormsby will be meeting Ambassador Bertie and Lady Ber-

tie over the tea-table once every week and I shall get introduced to all that set and get a lay official position as under secretary of something which leaves me free to paint all the morning in the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, and pay all my debts at the same time out of the handsome appointments I shall receive.

Sure enough, Parslow went down to write up the inauguration service and interview the Bishop for the "Herald." It was all arranged between the editor-in-charge and Parslow without my knowing, and I must say Parslow did it wonderfully, considering that he is a champion swearer on the night-staff in the Rue du Louvre—(ask Frost)—and not at all a church-going man.

As it was, he was late for the Morning Service.

He went to the Evening Service, however, and came back to the office (though it was his night off that night) to write up his copy.

"Why, Parslow, you look quite respectable to-night," shouted Archambault, as the rugged-bearded warrior entered, dressed in black with a clean collar.

"Didn't the roof fall in?" screamed Fougner, who, with a green shade over his eyes, was editing Pierre Veber's dramatic critique in French.

Next morning at 3.30 a.m. there was the Bishop's portrait with one column, giving the texts preached on for Morning and Evening Service, and altogether a slap-up, juicy, religious article, smart as pins, and right in the "Herald's" style.

All the swearing used in editing this column article and putting the Seven Head on it was neatly expunged.

I went to see the Bishop a few days afterwards.

He said it was a pity "that man from the 'Herald'" (poor Parslow—how are the mighty fallen!) didn't take the trouble to come to the Morning Service, as it was quite impossible for him, the Bishop, to remember what he had said at 10 a.m., which Parslow required him to do at 9 p.m. after the Evening Service.

But I could scarcely listen to what the Bishop was talking about, because I was so astounded to find he was not the Ormsby I knew at all.

That, however, seemed to be a matter of indifference to him, and he talked so agreeably and welcomed me so kindly, mind I go to church to-night at 8 p.m., by the way, that I actually showed him my sketch-book.

"The Ormsby you knew," said he, "was the step-brother of my sister-in-law."

Well, perhaps the less said about him the better, I

thought to myself. This Bishop Ormsby is the man of the hour.

Bishop Ormsby, fresh from the Wilds of Honduras, was so kind to an outsider like me. I told him I was on the staff of the "Herald," and would try and get church notices in when he wanted it done, and he gave me his card and told me to come and see him and his wife when they were settled in Paris.

It must have been two or three months later that I received a written invitation from him to come to dinner.

There was no time to go to church first. I simply had to rush for my washing, borrow five francs from Smith for emergency expenses, and jump on the Metro.

That sudden desire of mine to go to church first can only be compared to the death-bed repentance of a hardened sinner.

Too late, my dear sir, too late.

But after all, though I had never visited the Bishop's church in the Rue d'Aguesseau since he took charge (because I am superstitious, and sometimes I have a strange horror of church, which I will explain another time, if I can), he was perfectly delightful, frank, hospitable.

"I'm a bachelor to-night," said he. "My wife is in London. Let me introduce you to my only other guest, who is by chance a namesake of your's, and then we'll sit down to dinner—eh?"

And that strange series of reminiscences that belongs to my father's rectory and to the days almost of childhood came rushing back.

I remembered the rooks that woke us with their cawing at early morning, in the trees behind the rectory. The smell of hay was in my nostrils again. I heard the rush of the wicked sparrows and other winged thieves, as we opened the creaking door of the great, sun-baked kitchen garden, and all the hosts of feathered poachers flew away up from the netting over the strawberry beds and hid themselves again under the broad thatch that crowns the old stone wall.

I remembered Dan Lewington, who gave me the largest potato I have ever roasted in my life, and who himself lived in the tiny thatched cottage down by the gates of the rectory; and the tennis parties, and church decorations—the long rambles through dewy woods to find the moss—that pure, rich moss—which was used for the font, and which looked so fine, with white lilies on it.

The peace and quietness of our church on a Sunday morning, the colours on the wall, when the sun shone through the golden paintings on the windows. The great

yew tree in the churchyard, which its own weight or the winter storms had split in twain, so that its enormous trunk was only bound together by a huge chain.

All these recollections came crowding into my mind, together with Tommy Giggs' tree, blasted by lightning on the road to Steventon; the blind man, Enos, who rang the bells on Sundays and saints' days. Again I hear the tap of the stick along the country road and down the hill by the kitchen garden. The lovely twins, daughters of the squire at Steventon, and who rode so gallantly to hounds, bending gracefully under the interlacing of the branches, where the nut trees, beaded with dew, stood out black against the winter's sky.

"We talk'd: the stream beneath us ran,
The wine-flask lying couch'd in moss,

Or cool'd within the glooming wave;
And last, returning from afar,
Before the crimson-circled star
Had fall'n into her father's grave.

And brushing ankle-deep in flowers,
We heard behind the woodbine veil
The milk that bubbled in the pail,
And buzzings of the honied hours."

. . . . . .

There are many people who cannot understand Tennyson, but Bishop Ormsby is one of those who love him, and we were on congenial ground at once. I only regret that I have left my complete edition of the poet's works in London, with so much else that is useful and ornamental.

We had for dinner at the Bishop's—soup (good); potatoes (but no cocoa and no toast). After soup, fish (good); white wine (excellent). After fish—I forget—some meat. I was talking about Lederkopf, where I and my brothers went to school, and the Bishop mentioned at once the name of the Rev. Rutty, the headmaster, and said he had two sons there. So we rushed off at that tangent and Tennyson was forgotten for the moment.

When I came to myself I was slowly eating an orange and had told a lot of secrets about my past life.

The other guest, called Parsons, who was eating and talking most properly on the other side of the table, also chimed in. He had once carried round the bag in the English church, but had been superseded and had a grievance against the former parson.

It appears he had his views on the separation of Church and State. The Bishop asked him what they were.

"A good thing for the Church," he replied; "because the people, having now to pay for the Church out of their own pockets will take more interest in it. And the clergy, looking to the people for their living, will take more interest in their congregations."

A double blunder—false argument and lack of tact, I said to myself. For I was naturally listening. The Bishop spoke up, proudly, at once: "Well, the last-mentioned reason is not a very high one, is it?"

But all that was nothing. Coffee in the study by a good log fire. Cigarettes ad lib.—liqueur.

More rectory recollections. A little mild, diluted history of our daily life in the ateliers of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts—the noise the students make while painting.

The Bishop's experiences are different to mine, but he also has his troubles. The ambassador forgot to ask him to say grace on one occasion or something—I suppose the good old customs are dying out.

Oh, happy and righteous evening, art thou, too, already numbered with the past?

But look! What have we here? A living memento of the happy hours, in the shape of a sketch which I made of the Bishop, lounging in his chair by the log fire. It is almost midnight. His eyes are closed. He has given me the requested permission to sketch.

Now I must go to catch one of the last trains home on the Metro.

I have no doubt that through my acquaintance with Bishop Ormsby, who is in with Ambassador and Ambassadress Bertie, I shall one day meet the King of England!

What sport! The great thing is not to borrow money from all these people.

. . . . . .

My leaden franc weighs heavy on my mind,
'Tis all that I possess, and of its kind
Is useless if recipient be not blind.

I shall doubtless pass it on a 'bus one day. I might even give it in the church collection to-night! New idea, as Frost would say, in his excellent staccato manner.

CHAPTER XVI.

AMEXCO.

These magic words stand for "The American Express Company" all the world over. I am not going to advertise unduly this lofty and high-minded concern, whose principles are known to every client who expedites his potatoes or silk and cotton goods through its intermediary.

From 9 a.m. till 7 p.m. I type like a slave on a Smith-Premier machine letters dictated both in English and French for this company, who make an effort to forward other peoples' goods safely from the Continent to America and vice versa. I say " make an effort," for in justice to the firm it must be said that everybody does their level best to ensure cases getting through; but frequently they fall into the hands of the Douane, and then a long correspondence arises and as the dossier grows bigger and bigger, so the chances of the safe arrival of that case at destination grow smaller and smaller, and at last the miserable case disappears altogether from the scene, leaving only the enormous dossier of correspondence. It is sickening, both for the firm Amexco and for the shipper of the goods. I say nothing of the consignee. He wrings his hands and gnashes his teeth; but the months roll on and no goods arrive. And the season passes and there is no longer any need for the samples which were sent him. The trade in that special line has died out. People don't buy fancy parasols in mid-winter (except for the Riviera), nor fur-lined coats in the heat of summer.

I am not suggesting that every package sent by this —— company goes wrong! Many and many a package arrives safe in port, spite of shipwrecks, fires and the wily manœuvres of railway servants who have not the fear of the Lord in their hearts.

But—ah! those buts!—remember the poor man out at Havana, by name Soriano, who keeps on waiting for his cinematograph films. They arrive all right; but the bills of lading which ought to have reached him through the post are always late; so he has the pleasure of knowing that the cases are awaiting him in the Havana Douane, but he can-

not touch them because he has no bills of lading to present to the Customs authorities in order to make good his claim.

Well, instead of discussing these disagreable subjects, I shall tell you about the staff. First of all, there is Bentz. He arrives a little late in the morning sometimes. Amusing, certainly, to see a man of thirty-five odd years, especially a Frenchman, climbing up the staircase that leads to our office like a grey cat who has been on the tiles all night, fearful as he is of being nabbed by the manager, who will cry out to him, spoiling all the soft subterfuge: "Eh, bien, Bentz, il n'y a pas moyen?"

This means that if Bentz does not arrive punctual on the stroke of 9 a.m. at this sacred office where I work, he will get the unleavened and unsophisticated sack.

He has little to do, and pulls the wings from bluebottles on a sultry summer's afternoon and plays hide and seek on tiptoe with Rist, a bearded, short-statured Frenchman of forty, ugly as sin or a monkey, whose idea of "making things hum" as the Americans deftly term it, is to run very fast up and down stairs, rattling his boots and banging doors as he goes through our office. The draughts he creates in my room are fearful. There are two swing doors which are never shut for more than five minutes, one behind me, and the other in front, and an open window at my side. I have had a chronic cold in the nose for eight months of the time during which I have laboured for this beautiful and high-minded firm, whose head offices, as you know, are in New York. They are too poor to pay me more than Fr.60 per week.

I was mentioning Mr. Rist, who is so fond of the sound of his own voice that when he has nothing else to do, which is most of the time, he cries continually, "Allo, Allo!" at the telephone which connects him with Havre—just as the angels cry without ceasing "Alleluia!" in the rent-free halls of Paradise.

As this costs little and makes a great deal of noise, Rist cries fit to make the glass roof ring. He pretends, of course, to be communicating with Havre, but really he wants the manager to hear, from his private office upstairs, how hard he, Rist, is working for his living (which is considerably better paid than mine, because, as you know, those who shout loudest in this life are always the ones who succeed the quickest! That accounts, I suppose, for the noise in all great cities).

I never cease typing, while the others are playing about trying to make believe that they are working, and not succeeding at the farce either, while Agent Paroutaud dic-

tates fifty to sixty letters at lightning speed to me per day, in English and French equally; while Piron, the chief cashier, dictates downstairs in French to me; and Rist, the assistant-agent in English and French, the happy stenographers in the traffic department down the passage are three to three managers, and get away punctually at six p.m. each night. I only hope Mr. Dalliba, manager at the Rue Scribe office, will arrive at having this page of my book beneath his eyes. It will throw some light on a subject which has been puzzling him from a distance for some time, and that is, why his traffic department manager does not reduce his staff.

I work for a French manager called Paroutaud, who has ten times the amount of correspondence to dictate daily that Mr. Smith, the traffic manager in the same office has. But as unfortunately Mr. Smith has a higher standing in the company that Mr. Paroutaud, Smith is in a position to order as many shorthand clerks as he likes to assist him in his work, while Mr. Paroutaud, wo has established a reputation for economy still struggles on with one shorthand clerk who has enough letters and other documents to type to keep him employed tapping on the machine for nine hours daily—an arduous task above all in the hot summer weather, when the whole force of the sun is reflected into my little office off the vast glass roof which covers the square hall below, where the pair-horse vans load and unload their cargoes of heavy cases. Very often from June to September this little room up above is like a real furnace or a baker's oven. But all the same one must keep on typing all day, running out now and again to spend one's scanty salary on a glass of something with eau-de-vie and ice in it.

And then each time one applies for a rise, after nine months in such a service, the word comes back from the head office of this great company that owing to the depression of trade in the United States it is out of their power to give me an increase of five francs a week. This is about the same thing as if Mr. Rockefeller were to give orders that owing to his financial embarrassments he expected the servants to burn no fires during the winter or to collect any cigar stumps found about the house and bring them back to his study to be smoked over again.

But this is not all. When it was found in Smith's department that I was a fairly swift and able shorthand writer, both in English and French, stray agents belonging to Smith's traffic department, men to whom I had never spoken before, began to dribble gradually into my room

and ask me just as a favour to take a few four-page letters in the midst of the rush of my ordinary work. They coolly announced that they had Mr. Paroutaud's authority to give me this extra work. Unfortunately there was no extra pay attached to these little services, but my reward arrived from another direction—the idle shorthand clerks belonging to Smith's department used to come in and flaunt their idleness before me. Niemans, especially, Smith's personal shorthand clerk, would arrive snapping his fingers with delight to watch me working and to announce to me that "he had not had one single letter to write that whole day and that Smith had just recommended him for a rise of Frs. 25 per month," while my own application for a rise had been refused. "And," added Niemans, "it is only fair that I should have a rise. I have been here two years."

The friendly Niemans did not, however, tell me these details all at once—il m'a ménagé un peu cette surprise. He first entered my room dancing and singing, snapping his fingers like a lunatic. When I asked him what was the matter be disclosed to me that his application for an increase of salary had been more successful than mine, while he was to remain in the same delicious state of complete idleness. Mr. Smith, however, always regarded me with considerable supicion, as those very often are regarded who have to bear the heat and the burden of the day.

Then Raeburn. This strange mixture of Canadian and Cockney. We never knew really what to make of him. He is called the "assistant traffic agent," and persists through thick and thin in speaking French with such a terrible English accent you could cut it with a sharp knife. Poor Monsieur Paroutaud bears up bravely under the strain of listening to this weird French, for Monsieur Paroutaud, my manager, is a Frenchman born. It must, therefore, pain him to hear his maternal language "murdered," even more than it pains me.

"What! You have got your hat on!"

It was a Saturday afternoon at four o'clock when this phrase, burning with sarcasm, was flung at my otherwise defenceless head by Manager Paroutaud. I had dared to make preparation for departing for the afternoon, seeing that all the traffic department down the passage had "parted" two hours before. I was called to order pretty severely and told that "in future, sir, you will stay here on Saturday afternoons till 6 p. m. always."

Alas, my hat!

I might give you a sketch of one day's thoughts during a

hard mail day of typewritng—no overtime ever paid for—not one sou during the year I remained there, but these thoughts cover such a wide range of trifles that you would be dismayed and bored.

First, then (hammer, hammer, hammer on the hard, white keys), thoughts about Miss Peyter, the eternal best girl. What is she doing now, and where? The bill I owe at Chancery-lane Safe Deposit, London, for storage of my goods. When shall I succeed in paying it? (Hammer, hammer, hammer.) Whether I can afford to go to Versailles next Sunday and paint the shepherd. "Nous avons l'avantage de vous envoyer ci-inclus connaisement pour les caisses 5,432-5,434, contenant des peaux——" What has become of Marthe Aubrey, the prettiest model? "Nous vous ferons remarquer que vous nous devez toujours la somme de Frs. —— pour le magazinage des caisses ci-dessus, et nous prions d'agréer, Monsieur, nos salutations empressées." Whether I ought not to send five francs to Chapman, chief engineer of the Underground Electric Railways Company of London, Limited, from whom I borrowed this sum last time I crossed to that genial city. (Hammer, hammer, hammer.) "Nous avons l'avantage de vous aviser de la rentrée de votre remboursment sur l'expédition H.A. 265, valeur Frs. 2,000 et nous tenons cette somme à votre disposition, contre présentation de cette lettre, et reçu de votre part, déduction faire de Frs. 0.35 de récépisse. Agréez, etc." Whether Boissard, massier of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, thinks it is funny about that duel I threatened to fight with Miss Peyter's brother-in-law, and whether he doesn't think it still funnier that I don't yet pay up for my share of the patron's dinner, at which I drank so much good champagne.

Whether it is possible to write a book on Paris in the office, using the office machine, after eight o'clock p. m., when I have finished my ordinary day's work.

Conclusion: That on a salary of Frs. 250 a month in Paris it is utterly impossible to live in Paris and pay your debts. It means living strictly alone, without friends—for friends, both male and female, expect you at least to go with them to cafés and theatres sometimes and take your turn and pay your round of drinks.

And talking about low, sweating salaries, what right, I ask, have Americans to come over here and exploit honest Englishmen who work for their living in Paris? Do they think that because we find ourselves on this side of the Channel we have all consequently been expelled from England, having been perhaps locked up in the prisons of that nation, and dare not return there; and therefore must and

shall accept the starvation wages offered by the American Express Company, and other half-bred concerns over here in this City?

No, what they think rather is that, owing to the French law, which is a little difficult for an Englishman, they can easily escape their obligations to employés. We have a cassier, who is sixteen years of age and works till nine and ten o'clock at night without overtime money, doing the work of a man at a boy's salary, sans doute, without the knowledge of Mr. Dalliba, and that there are no organised Trade Unions or Courts of Appeal for British working men in this City of Paris. And that they can therefore do as they damned well like, and as they would not dare to do over there in America or England, where the weight of public opinion and the force of numbers forms a considerable factor in the lives of the less rich of human beings.

Niemans of course is a lucky dog. He is the other English stenographer for the French and English correspondence in the freight office, but he belongs to the traffic department, down the passage and is in with Smith, his boss. He, therefore, gets half-holidays given him. He is even allowed to be ill. And sometimes he gets sent out to visit clients. And even when he is locked in with the others he has little to do; sometimes, nay, often, nothing to do, and borrows my newspaper and goes away to the only quiet retreat which is known in the office and where a person is at liberty at all times to lock himself away from the public gaze, and there he enjoys an absolute, if unsalubrious, quietude and reads the paper and smokes for half an hour together. He is incorrigibly idle. Niemans, the idle man, comes and flaunts his idleness in my face when I am overworked, when, with bent brow, I stagger on under the load of dictated letters, double extra copies, expenses, and all the idiotic rigmarole and red-tape of a company which is inspired by the one idea that it is good to heap up detail and to complicate simplicities, and would rather spend Frs. 25.00 in postage stamps and correspondence than lose a debit of Frs. 5.50. This has actually been done scores of times, in correspondence extending in one case over one year on one trifling matter of Frs. 5 which was in dispute.

The concierge's cat comes as a relief. One of the bright spots in all this misery is the concierge's cat, which dwells with its mistress in the passage that leads in to our freight office. She, at least, does not work too much. She does not understand any French and always flies when she hears my accent. I was told that somebody had given her a fright a long time ago.

Another "light upon the dark waters" is the "Café Opposite." You would call it a "bar." As all lives, even the dullest, receive from Fate their bright embroideries of Chance (that which the French call "La Veine") so here we stand face to face with the Café Opposite and its genial proprietor. (See sketch.) He will never read these words, so I can lay on the flattery as thick as I like. At the moment of writing I do not even know his name. I know, however, that he gives me unlimited credit (remind me to mark down the amer picon, citron, I had half an hour ago —most suave of apératifs!) for drinks, and even lends me an occasional five francs when I am hard up for "cinq balles."

Then, from M. Allaume's room—he is the chief bookkeeper—one can catch a glimpse of a small private garden, with trees in it. I sometimes go and stand there so as to escape for five minutes from the burning fiery furnace of my own room in summer, but——.

"Have you any more letters, Mr. Parsons?" There you are, you see, impossible to write this stuff any more. The question rings in my ears. The manager is anxious to go. I have type-written from 9 a.m. till 7 p.m. without a stop except for lunch. In the morning I felt fairly fresh. But after midi it began—a sort of stale repetition of thoughts to the accompaniment of a constant hammer—hammer—hammer on the keys of the little machine. Then a bitter taste comes into one's mouth—and one dreams of the rectory garden.

But note, gentle reader, where injury is added to insult, and how we poor puppets, held in the iron grip of the Amexco tongs, are grilled over the fire of their impatience to wax rich on the sufferings of their employés!

On joining the sublime firm I had, like all other candidates for this favour, to present unimpeachable testimonials covering a period of ten years, all of which were taken up and verified. I had to supply the names of four personal friends who are not relatives and who would guarantee in writing as to my private character. I had to give the profession and Christian or baptismal names of my parents (my grandparents narrowly escaped from this ordeal, peace to their honourable bones).

I have before me at this moment of writing the documents which I had to fill up and sign in order to be passed as an employé at Frs. 60 a week. One column of questions, entitled "Personal Description," demands the colour of my eyes, the shape of my nose, any marks that I may have,

such as tattooing or old scars (gained, I suppose, in rough and tumble fights with the police).

Another column of questions traces my antecedents for nearly a quarter of a century, and forbids me to allege as reason for leaving any firm where I have previously worked that I gave notice to leave of my own free will. This is not counted as an excuse for having left a firm. There exists apparently a sort of freemasonry between all capitalists, which makes it impossible for a man to leave their employ of his own free will. He must wait till he is given the sack! If he left at all, the reason must be, that he was given the sack. And if he does not get it at a convenient moment, he must wait till he does get it.

Finally, this inquisitorial document comes to a close with this crowning paragraph, which conveys a sense of the complete autocracy of the firm:

> *In case of an accident occurring to me while in the employ of the company, I hold them absolutely free, and my signature hereto attached constitutes their entire discharge from all liability, etc.*

Even though, working as I do in the freight office, a case of a couple of tons' weight may fall on my head at any moment, or I may be jammed in the entrance door by a restive horse attached to one of the company's vans. The very camionneurs themselves are bound under the same engagement to bring no claim for compensation against the company for whom they work in case of accidents sustained in the course of their daily work.

But enough! The great fact remains that, having bound me with all these signatures, I am treated with suspicion by those very managers who are themselves swindling me out out of my time and money, who forget to pay me for the overtime work, and who give me the work of three men so as to keep down their expenses. They rob me of my time and health, under the very shadow of the law, and by means of "legal" documents, duly signed and stamped, they place me in the impossibility of retaliating and paralyse all reciprocity by their one-sided contract.

En plus, they deduct annually a certain amount from my small salary in case I should run away from the firm owing them something. In other words, I am "bonded" in $1,500 and pay out of my own pocket the premium of Frs. 11.55 to safeguard my employers from all risks. The risks that I run of losing my health, eyesight, and intellect in their poisonous little room where I work are not covered or safeguarded in any way.

P.S.—Throughout this article I must not be taken as accusing Monsieur Paroutaud of any harshness. On the contrary, he was frequently considerate. As one of the agents of the company, however, he was obliged to enforce their disagreeable and unjust rules. "M.R.P."—"Many Rolling Parrots."—I shall never forget my chief's initials, and shall recollect with affection this old phrase that I concocted in order to commit them to memory; for these initials had to be typed on the lower left-hand corner of each letter he dictated.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE GARDEN OF EDEN.

MORET-SUR-LOIGN,
September 20, 1908.

A few days ago the manager in the office where I grind gave me a week's holiday, and I made all necessary preparations to quit Paris and visit Saint Malo on the Coast of Brittany.

As, however, all the way down the road from the office of the hotel to the station I met creditors more or less pressing, I arrived at the station (Gare de Montparnasse) with very little money to speak of, but plenty of luggae for a week's holiday, c'est-à-dire, an easel, a heavy box of oil colours, a large canvas and a weighty valise.

At the station, where I arrived just in time to catch the 8.35 train, the porter told me abruptly that no such train existed and that the next train to St. Malo was eleven o'clock, and was first and second class only.

I excused myself.

Third class is my ticket.

"However," he said, "the 8.35 train which you have come to catch starts from the Gare des Invalides, which is far from here."

This, I said to myself, gives pause! Perhaps I will not go to St. Malo at all. It is true there was an afternoon and evening train, both third class, from the Gare des Invalides.

But the question of luncheon arises. I prefer to lunch in Paris, and to my great regret I find, after having lunched, that I have eaten up part of the price of my ticket. There no longer remains the necessary reserve of funds.

I also dine in Paris and reflect with some comfort that I shall not now be able to catch the night train to St. Malo, which after all is a sleepless sort of journey.

I return home and go to bed.

My luggage is always at the consigne de la gare. I shall no doubt raise some cash to-morrow and go down the line with it.

After all, what is there to hurry about?

To-morrow breaks a splendid autumn morn. I feel some-

what at a loss, as all my useful things, such as soap and brush and comb, are at the Gare des Invalides.

I go out, however, and eat up some more of the price of my ticket.

The following day I abandon St. Malo.

I have the good fortune to raise some extra funds, and as I have been told that Moret is a charming village, full of spots for painting and only sixty-two kilometres from Paris and eleven kilometres the other side of Fontainebleau, I call at the Gare des Invalides, take out all my luggage, and journey by auto-taxi to the Gare de Lyon. At four p.m. I arrive at Moret. A shaky pair-horse omnibus conveys me to the Hotel Chevillon. The patron seems indifferent whether I take a room or not, but condescends to give me one on the ground floor at seven francs per day.

It is all very charming. The river flows just by the edge of the garden. The strain of the town relaxes. The garçon, sleek and polite, brings me my chocolate by the water's edge at eight o'clock. I like to see him descending by rustic paths and green avenues, carrying the silver tray in his hands and inclining himself this way and that to avoid the caress of the downward-trailing foliage. His footsteps, "loud on the stone and soft on the sand," have something of enchantment in then, when I appreciate the fact that he serves me alone, as there are no other guests in the hotel save and except two ladies whom I have not yet seen. The summer season is over and the rush from the town has ceased. All the better. A little individual attention after the wholesale manner of being served in the big City restaurants does not come amiss—especially in a garden the banks of which are bathed by a broad river in which tall trees are mirrored.

At twelve midday I clean my brushes and join the ladies at luncheon, still by the water's edge. My thoughts compose themselves a little. I regret that I did not know of this place before. One of these ladies is very charming—a dainty Parisienne, with a very ugly and expensive little dog, which wears bells round its neck and barks at male strangers.

All this time I hear a far-off cry—a pathetic, plaintive sound it is, which contains great weariness, like a sigh of nature, yet has a sweetness of its own.

This is the cry of the drivers of the donkeys who haul the barges up the canal. The lock is close to the gates of our hotel. I find myself looking down into the lock in the afternoon. There is something allegorical of life going on. A quiet rising of waters in the lock and a noisy falling

of waters in the lower pool. The law of compensation is at work and the donkeys are nibbling grass and switching at the flies instead of towing the barge. Presently the barge goes away and as it disappears round a bend of the poplar-lined canal I feel a sort of sorrow, as though I had known the craft and its occupants all my life.

The next afternoon I walk across a bridge and visit the village and, passing down the hollow of a dark tunnel that leads under the ancient houses, I find myself at the riverside beside the roar of a cataract and the beatings of the flat wooden spades that the washerwomen use as they clean the linen all day on the flagstones by the running water.

These two sounds, the roar of the water and the sound of the beating of the flat wooden spades in the open air, also penetrate into the mind and drive out a lot of musty, confused ideas that come from the town.

And at night I stood at seven o'clock on the heights above the village and saw gigantic arms of golden clouds stretched out over the earth like the arms of one pronouncing a blessing.

Then the grasshoppers on the splendid, lonely hill made a mighty sound of hammers, and the huge, long-haired caterpillar, clothed in golden fur, unrolled himself and climbed perilously across the blades of grass.

Gradually the village and the river and the canal faded away out of sight. Only along the horizon of the hills a line of crimson promised a brilliant morrow.

Just as the roaring cataract above the mill, by the bridge that leads into the village (by the ancient stone gateway), had carried away half my bitter thoughts, so the remainder fell into the vast valley at the hour of sunset and were lost.

I came down the hill munching ripe apples which I found lying on the grass under the apple-trees, close by the vineyards of ripe purple grapes.

Then I heard a new music, which made me forget St. Malo. This was a girl's voice, which uttered trivial phrases, but so sweetly that I remembered home and my sisters and things that happened, well, twenty years ago.

She was married, but I did not find that out for two days. She had as companion another lady staying with her. The third day of my holiday I was alone in the hotel with these two and we dined by the river's edge in the darkness of the garden, our tables being lit by one solitary electric light, hung in the willow-trees.

The noise of the water-rat who plunged in the tall rushes at our side did not offend us. And the wide river moved slowly on in the darkness, like a story unfolding itself in a dream.

It was only the fourth day that trouble began. I had actually paid for the first two days of my stay, at seven francs a day. But the patron of this charming hotel was willing to let me stay on the third and fourth day if I left behind me as security my easel, my large finished oil-colour of the river, and my box of colours. Two more days of paradise on earth in a real Garden of Eden were not dear at this price.

But I had some most pressing things still to say to the younger of the two ladies and I was thoroughly disgusted when the patron said I could not stay for the fifth day—the Sunday.

The garçon also seemed thoroughly and heartily disgusted. He learnt to his astonishment that I was going away without giving him a sou. It was true that I was to return at the end of the month, ten days hence, and settle my bill and take my picture and other goods away.

But he evidently had decided that I was destined to an early grave and he told me he had no faith in my promises to pay him later on. It was the first time, he said, such a thing had occurred. He would accept, if I offered it him, a nice water-colour painting I had done of the bridge and the women washing their clothes in the water under it.

I declined.

I said good-bye to the charming Parisienne (not without having learnt her name and offered to give her lessons in English), and having lost my fifteen-shilling umbrella on my way to the station, I caught the 7.35 p.m. train and arrived in Paris.

Sic transit gloria mundi.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AFRICA IN PARIS.

It was about Christmas time, and things were not looking particularly gay with me, when I learnt that I was "wanted" by an African explorer. Mr. Herbert Ward, the gentleman in question, was years ago one of the officers of Stanley's rear-guard in the Emin Pacha Relief Expedition. He had shared with Captain Bartlett, Mr. Rose Troupe, Mr. Jameson, and other Central African pioneers the terrible privations of life in the savage village of Yambuya.

Mr. Herbert Ward, who was about to dictate his book "A Voice from the Congo" to me, is at once an explorer, sculptor, and author.* He now makes France his home. One of his finest bronzes, the colossal statue entitled "Le Chef de Tribu," was exhibited last spring in the Paris Salon, and is about to take its place in the Luxembourg Galleries among the works of art belonging to the French nation.

I was quickly fascinated by the romance of his experiences in the Congo. The story of the discovery of these cannibalistic races was profundly interesting. I learnt this story from the lips of a man who had lived five years with the Congo cannibals and who knew no less than three of their native languages—a rare acquisition, and one which distinguishes Mr. Ward from many who, like himself, have travelled the world over since their youth.

I shall try to convey an impression of how, working day by day for several weeks in his studio filled with actual specimens of the handwork of the savages—their drums, their spears, bows, arrows, ivory horns, and wooden idols —there crept upon me the very spirit of those far-off scenes.

First I was interested. And later on I began to regard with astonishment my ignorance on the whole subject.

My preconceived idea of the Central African savage, as a being who was inhuman in every way, dangerous as a wild animal, and as impossible to conciliate as a madman, gave

*"A Voice from the Congo," by Herbert Ward. Published by Heineman, London; Hachette, Paris; Scribner, New York.

place to another impression. As I heard these actual stories and anecdotes of kindness shown to the white man by cannibals who saw a European for the first time, a new light seemed to shine in the darkness of these far-away forests, and I realised that, to quote Mr. Ward's own words: "Human nature is more or less the same the whole world over."

Long before these words appear this revelation will have been shared by thousands of others who will have read the book which was dictated to me by Mr. Herbert Ward. They will conclude that this traveller explored further into the character of the Central African savages than ever Stanley did. For Stanley never rested long enough in one place to learn much of the tribal language. Talking and fraternising with cannibals in their huts, Mr. Herbert Ward often carried in his hand no adequate defence, but in his heart the great talisman of sympathy and humour.

. . . . . .

I was struck by Mr. Ward's exceptional character as a writer. All my previous estimates, all my stereotyped conceptions of literary character were contradicted.

He has no stupid introspective hesitation. He is not hypercritical in style.

His valuable experience as lecturer on Central African topics has gven him a keen insight into the real value of words.

Thanks to a sound and hardened physical constitution, he has preserved, notwithstanding much literary work, a healthy and sturdy independence of judgment which enables him to decide rapidly on questions of style and to ignore the criticism of irresponsible reviewers.

An active man, an excellent shot, an organiser, and an old African campaigner, he brings to bear upon his literary work a fund of concentrated and self-contained energy before which a mass of confusing details becomes transformed into an ordered system of arranged facts, properly pruned of all extravagant description.

He appears to know nothing of the agony of over self-consciousness and self-criticism which prevents some writers from exercising a proper freedom, even when alone with their pen in their own studies.

He is inspired by countless souvenirs of former triumphs in the African jungle. These souvenirs now hang upon his walls in the form of native Central African spears, bows, grass-cloth skirts, axes, and ivory trumpets, or stand grouped around the vast atelier in the shape of huge bronzes of African chiefs, fugitive slaves, and other mas-

terly studies sculptured by his own hand, according to documents, drawings and data brought by him from the Congo district. Together with these are skeletons of gorillas, stuffed skins of lurking pythons, majestic heads and trunks of elephants. He thus writes in a real African atmosphere, where everything smells of those wild and savage scenes which, previous to his time, had been untrodden by the foot of a white man.

In this vast studio are exhibited in all three thousand articles. Besides Central African weapons of warfare are to be found necklaces of human teeth; musical instruments made by cannibals, and giving forth a soft, rich melody of their own, full of mystery; enormous bronze statues, lit with a pale uncivilised light.

As Mr Ward says: "Sometimes when I beat the native log-wood drum, my studio seems to become peopled with those savages whom I grew to understand."

. . . . . .

Each word of his leads one further into the wilderness which he is describing. I often expected to find his phrases moulded according to the routine phrases of those who describe adventurous doings in the columns, say, of the "Boys' Own Paper." But the turn of his phrase is always unexpected. At the moment when I thought I could fill the blank with one of my stereotyped dictionary words a new door in the chapter was opened quietly by him, and I found that he was only searching for the real words which would express a certain phrase of his actual experience and existence in this savage land of Africa.

A new light pours into the forest, and just as the scene-shifter in a theatre transfigures before our eyes the old familiar décor, so I see, instead of the cut-and-dried vocabulary of the romancers, the real path that leads a step further into the jungle, and hear the real sounds that he heard, and stand before the secret of the heart of Africa revealed.

The temptation, especially to those of some imagination, is to think that they can learn in a few hours or a few days what another man has learnt through years of dangerous experience in the actual scenes which he is describing. No greater error could be imagined.

The more we follow him the further he goes away from us, and he can, in a moment, if he wishes, retire so utterly into the impenetrable forest of his own real reminiscences that we stand there where he left us lost in the mazes of imagination, and without a clue as to his whereabouts.

Here is where fact is so much stranger than fiction. For fact has always another surprise left in its locker, whereas fiction must be limited to the extent of the reader's credulity, and cannot profitably be stretched beyond that limit.

. . . . . .

In the midst of dictating his book, Mr. Ward one day threw down his pen and rushed off to hunt the wild boar in the forests of the Ardennes.

On his return he brought with him the head of a boar which had been a terror to man and beast for years, and which he had set at close range while it was charging full upon him. He then resumed the book from the point where he had left off, and completed it.

. . . . . .

One evening I was having supper with Mr. Ward in the studio. Everything was delicious, including the wine, and the repast was approaching completion when my host asked me if I would have some cheese. An excellent-looking Camembert was placed before me, which had only once been cut. It had a creamy look about it which spoke volumes. Before helping myself I asked Mr. Ward if he would have some. "Thanks," he replied, "I never eat cheese."

Strange! I reflected; yet this is perhaps only another characteristic trait in the make-up of an African campaigner, who, accustomed to lunch off locusts and wild honey in the wilderness, abhors cheese. Well, here goes. It is hard to cut, however, I said to myself, as I bent the weight of my knife on it. Nothing daunted I pressed harder. But the game was up. It was made of composition.

. . . . . .

Thursday, January 12, 1910.

These days see us drawing to the close of this work.

To-night, as he read aloud to me his last chapter, it seemed to me that words sprang so vividly into life in that congenial atmosphere of African trophies, that the very bronzes of the savages, posed in all livingness about the studio, took listening attitudes, and smiled at the enthusiasm of the white man, who hoped by his mystic writings to rid them of their cruel burdens.

Like children, they listened with awakened interest to the inflections of the voice that spoke in the tongue that was strange to them. But having ears they heard not, for it was a tongue they never learned to comprehend.

. . . . . .

Mr. Ward once said to me with a tinge of sadness in his voice:

"Some day, I suppose, people will wake up to the knowledge that there's something in it all, and that the history of this black race has not been told in vain. They will try and enlarge upon the facts we have given them, but they will only have these facts to go upon. And how much they will never know."

. . . . . .

We may surely suppose that here, in these primeval forests, we stand close to the secret of the genesis of human existence.

During the first fiery chaos of the earth's infancy, before any final pattern had been evolved, the germ of human life lay somewhere buried:

> But when its time was come it sprang
> From out its hidden cell and spread
> A hand to heaven and reared a head,
> And the dark woods with voices rang.

Perhaps these voices of the savages bring us nearer to the mystery of Creation.

. . . . . .

One day the bell rang, and in stepped a personal friend of Mr. Ward.

Who could ever forget the arrival of the Captain?—Naval Attaché at the British Embassy, if you please!

"Stand there! while I read to you my tribute to the missionaries," said Mr. Ward.

As these words sprang from his mouth, I felt that the decks were cleared for action.

All aloft and below was taut and trim. A keen so'-westerly wind was singing through the spars. The good ship was almost under way; and there stood the Captain, with eye over everything.

It was the finishing touch to the great book. And as the Captain entered you felt, coming up from the distant horizon of the seas, the keen, vivifying rush of the salt-laden breezes.

Work was done. The Captain had come aboard. The good ship "Congo Tales" began to move on the slips.

A bottle of champagne was broken over her. See! She is launched on the great highway of publicity.

"Stand there, Captain, while I read it to you!"

. . . . . .

January 20, 1910.

To-day I sat for the last time among the vast bronzes, in a dim, artificial twilight, dreaming.

At last I had to tear myself away. The curtain fell upon this dramatic piece of work; the book, "A Voice from the Congo," was finished, its seventy thousand words were completed. There lay the slain—in the shape of hundreds of shorthand notes and waste pieces of paper.

The giants in bronze were unmoved. Each savage stared stolidly and frowningly in front of him.

On the walls, the thousand-and-one articles, touched with golden reflections, completed the picture.

As I went out I seemed to hear a sudden burst of savage music—the log-wood drum was beaten by invisible hands, and there echoed through my vision of the primeval forest the far-off blast of ivory horns.

A CHILD'S AFRICA.

Far, far away in the forest,
  Where you children never can go
Is a land of wonder and dreams—
  No work, no winter, no snow.

Here all day long the hot sun
  Pours down on the wildest of flowers,
No grandfather's clocks to count
  The minutes or strike the hours.

No candles to light you to bed,
  No neat cots made of feathers and lace;
In a smart silver-mounted mirror
  You never can see your face.

No money is there—not a penny;
  Only cloth and beads can you trade
For the nice shining silver sixpence
  By the savages can't be made.

Nothing but insects buzzing:
  The naughty mosquito sings
All night by your mosquito curtain
  Hovering on tireless wings.

And here in the long sharp grasses
  The python rears his grim head—
Once he was twined around you
  You are crushed and swallowed and dead.

Here the wild guinea fowl
  Calls in the early hours
The ponderous elephant
  Tramples with all his powers;

And a mighty river rolls
  Like a fable at his feet
There are shadowy reaches still
  Where the long-jawed crocodiles meet.

With the hippopotami
  Those boisterous pigs of the stream
Who will sink your log canoe
  Before you've got time to scream.

And hark the monkeys that chatter
  Far away in the echoing wood
Scrambling in fear and anger
  After their daily food.

Here the black man lives in his glory
  With his shield and his spear and his wife—
His life is an untold story
  Of the dance, the trap and the knife.

Even the trees are alive
  For the savage knows full well
That each of his ancestors lives
  In the form of a tree; he will tell

How in the stormy nights
  When the leopard howled for fear
And the trumpeting elephants ran
  In the jungle far and near

He heard the trees groaning and sighing
  Like spirits ill at ease—
Broken and bruised and crying
  Rocked by the rushing breeze.

Of course since the advent of the rapacious Belgians and their systematic torturing of the natives for the purpose of terrorising the latter into collecting more rubber the white man's word is no longer accepted by an African native and the white traveller is liable to be shot on sight.

MISCELLANEOUS.

MISCELLANEOUS.

A PARISIAN DENTIST.

How rare and admirable a thing is the dentist. A being, I should say rather. How gravely he looks at you, wondering, no doubt, in his own mind whether you are going to pay when he has stopped your tooth. It is an unwritten law of this artist that he will work for you with all that exquisite care, that prompt decision, that finesse of skill of which he is capable, without asking you to pay a penny-piece in advance.

He will put in operation that horrible "burr," the very sound of which, grating its way gingerly within the hollow cavities of an enormous molar, seems to drive back into their uttermost recesses the last fragments of one's shattered courage.

Oh, inhuman engine of civilised surgery, thou keen and rasping file, which, driven at top speed by a pressure of the foot, or perhaps by an electric current, maintains that agonising speed within one's mouth, picking its way between decayed bone and dancing nerve-centres, with a sureness and an implacability alike incredible and horrible.

One's mind meanwhile ranges over the great cosmos, surveying Europe through the misty window-panes of the dentist's operating chamber. As in death, a thousand half or wholly-forgotten considerations rush through the brain. The imagination, awakened to its liveliest pitch, produces impossible pictures in the mind. One's creditors (burr! grate! crash—how near the nerve that was!) stand ranged in serried rows before one. (Burr—burr!) On the countenances of all is writ clearly that message of remonstrance whose only tangible form finds itself displayed in bills asking for prompt payment. Impossible pictures indeed——! One actually dreams, as that dread steel file grates closer to the tooth's root, that one has paid the dentist and is going merrily on one's way, with those dread, draughty cavities securely plumbed with adamantine chemical—a composition fit to stand the mastication of ten years—a metal that starts not back affrighted at the sound of the

grinding of the mills—that clashing of jaw-bones, which signifies good digestion waiting upon appetite.

"Thank you—till Wednesday next"

It is the voice of my friend, the dentist. A cold perspiration has gathered on my brow. I thought for a moment that he was going to ask for an instalment in advance. No; he bows me out most politely. If he knew that I had but one franc in my pocket!

Oh, teeth—would that I had more of you to save!

One day I went to see my friend, M. Ulbricht, a German, who carries on a business in Paris and whom I met for the first time in London, when he came to our boarding-house in 41, Guilford Street, and stayed there for some time. To-night he started from the Gare de l'Est on one of his rounds to Bâle (Suisse), Baden-Baden, Heidelberg, Frankfurt-sur-Main, Vienna, Hamburg, etc. His ticket cost Frs. 250 and looked like a three-volume novel, so many pages in it. I envied him, being free to roam on this excursion, which carries him as far as his own home in Germany. Of course he has to combine business with pleasure. After saying good-bye to him I watched some "rapides" come in from Nancy and other longer journeys. There is something very attractive to see, late at night, these leviathans come rolling majestically into their safe harbourage beneath the vast smoke-wreathed vault of the station, leaving behind them their huge, star-lit racecourse. Especially interesting (though few amongst the hundreds of passengers who owe their lives to him give him so much as a glance) is the driver, black-moustached, his ruddy face streaked with oil-stains. He stands erect upon the platform of his huge locomotive, the size of which dwarfs him, though he is of no mean stature. Released at last, after many hours of anxious peering through darkness, from his vigil on the train which is tearing across Germany and France, he stands at ease, though the set expression of his eyes still bears evidence of the strain imposed, and he watches, hurrying along the platform below him, the huge crowd of passengers—Germans muffled in vast leather-coloured overcoats, with slouch hats of the same colour and carrying, slung on their shoulders, hunting gear—immaculate leather valises in their hands. One leads by a chain a dog, who is trying his best to understand the meaning of it all, casting inquisitive glances upon his master as he hurries along, obedient to these calls of high-pressure civilisation. Here, a Frenchman is effusively met and greeted by his waiting friends, who seize his luggage for him. Here come soldiers in an unknown uniform. The next bunch of travellers may well

have come from China. It is the end of the journey. Paris, scintillating under the starlight, is well equipped, with her thousand pleasures and workshops, to receive them all and take from each her toll of joy or sorrow.

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Yesterday being Sunday, I went in the afternoon climbing to Montmartre. The view was glorious at the very top, and at five p.m., being an autumn night, the sun coming streaming very gloriously across from the west, struck through the coloured windows of the Eglise du Sacré Cœur, making rainbow patterns on the high, smooth walls. Away and far below these heights lies Paris, mist-wreathed and touched with sunlight, like ripened fruit. Towers and pinnacles soar out of the indistinct shapes of streets and gardens, but all below a certain height is merged in indistinct forms and shadows, like a submarine city.

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LANGUAGES.

There may be many that live peaceably enough through this world and pass out into the next with never any other language save their own to conjure with.

These do not know that great cosmopolitan congress which comprises nations of as many hues, manners, and languages as the rainbow has colours.

They never move in that strange dance through the mazes of which thread the guttural-tongued German, the sweet-voiced Frenchman, the clarion-toned Spaniard, even the chattering Chinee.

I met to-night a lady, quite young and very beautiful, who speaks not only those, but seven other languages. Waltzing round the world, she maintains the same graceful conversation, whether she speaks Norwegian in Norway, Russian in her own country, or the language of France in the Capital of that nation.

When she was aged but thirteen she spoke four languages with ease and fluency.

How different the life of this butterfly, flitting from city to city across the great continents of the world, and adapting her conversation to that of whatever nation she favours with her presence, to the life of, say (to take the other extreme), an honest agricultural labourer of Hampshire, who does not hold with "them furriners," and who passes sixty or seventy years in a quiet village, knowing no greater

excitement than an occasional visit to the nearest market town.

This is where education steps in, crying, "Open, Sesame!" to the locked secrets of nine-tenths of a universe, and causing to pass before the eye the variegated life and literature of nations inhabiting the uttermost parts of the earth.

The instance which I have named is, however, a special one. For Russian is one of the most difficult of languages that an Englishman can learn. A Briton may live ten years in Russia and be incapable of speaking the language comfortably. Whereas a Russian, having learnt his own language, finds all others absurdly easy to acquire, and talks English three months after he has landed on our shores.

Since the Tower of Babel was built, what complications, what absurd situations have ensued! How many of us, snugly ensconced with an English friend in a Continental hotel or inn, have unburdened our hearts freely, in the presence of those whom we judged ignorant of our language, only to discover afterwards, to our horror and stupefaction, that one or two who were listening possessed the magic key, and are now smiling serenely at our discomfiture.

E. Bryham Parsons.

("Evening Standard," March 6, 1906.)

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THE SLEEPLESS CITY.

The Gay City—which sleeps not. This is a gaiety that makes the eyes very red and mournful, like watery discs of purple that blink unceasingly at the sunlight.

Oh, Paris, fie, fie, on you!

I went into a restaurant the other Saturday at three o'clock p.m. and ordered some lunch and a bottle of English whiskey.

Presently I got busy in the illustrated papers. Desiring some gruyère cheese, that smooth stuff with holes in it, I called the waiter. He was se tenant debout—holding himself more or less upright in a great archway which led into the adjoining room. I presently approached and touched him. He was fast asleep. Thus the Gay City is in reality a City of Sleep. He fetched my cheese, and I tackled him gently on the subject. He explained that he generally worked till three o'clock in the morning. "Three hours the morning—it is too late. For the people of Paris it is not good."

I believed him. This all-night business, so charming to Englishmen let out on a holiday from genuinely soporific London, where a restaurant found open at three in the morning would be visited with a crushing fine—this all-night business of the Gay City makes Jacques the waiter, or Henri, the rough-and-ready garçon of the Bouillon, a dull boy.

He must get what sleep he can, standing upright in the doorway, between the rush of the déjeûner and the turmoil of diner.

However elaborate may be the table at which I sit, whatever artistic floral decorations may lend their frail and beautiful charms to the scene, howsoever sweetly the musicians may make music over yonder behind the palms and the ferns, I am much discomforted by the knowledge that the waiter in attendance has had no sleep (to speak of) and is not likely to get any for many years to come.

Again, when I entered a Bouillon (for I am sometimes very economical) last Saturday to get some tea—French tea, you know, that funny pale hot water without any milk to it—the place seemed utterly deserted. It was 5.30 p.m. The voice of the patron made itself heard, in a lugubrious jargon. Suddenly, with sofe footsteps and utterly wearied eyes, came floating up from nowhere, flapping negligently their enormous napkins, half a dozen pitiable waiters, blinking and winking like owls who suddenly see daylight. No doubt they went to bed at four or five that morning for three hours' sleep. They seemed relieved to hear that I only wanted tea, and moreover that I only wanted one of them to serve me. The others disappeared as noiselessly as they came. The Parisian waiter does not snore. But I knew that not far from me, on the floor, on the stairs leading into the kitchen, or huddling themselves for warmth and comfort round some stove in the basement, the waiters slept that fearful sleep which knows no fixed hours, which is as full of shocks as some terrible nightmare, and which may be banished any instant by the terrible cry, "Café, un, s.v.p.!" which, breaking in upon their dreams, will bring the whole dozen of them to their feet, staggering, gasping, and blinking before a single insignificant customer.

26, Rue St. Petersbourg, Paris.

ONE OF THOSE BLACK ONES.*

Give me that black one!
  Can't I have that black one, please?
I should like to pick her up
  And place her on my knees;
She's a dainty buttercup,
  Full of sport, and such a tease.
Can't I have that black one?
  Give me one of those black ones, please.

Yes, I know there are plenty
  That dress in glorious red,
But all the same, for twenty
  Of rainbow-coloured head,
Give me the girl that dresses
  In black from tip to toe,
It's awfully chic and dainty,
  I say it, and I ought to know.

There are those that spend their caresses
  On blouses blue and green
And others go mad on dresses
  Of yellow with spots that are green;
But believe me, all these colours
  Fall flat and stupid and dead
And the girl that my arm presses
  Dresses black from foot to head.

So give me one of those black ones;
  Can't I have one, please,
With black pleats round her shoulders
  And black pleats round her knees?
Yellow and red and orange,
  What do I care for them all?
If I can't have one of those black ones
  I won't have one at all.

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* Even flying visitors to Paris have observed that the predominance of black is frequently a feature in the dress of the exquisite little Parisian ladies. Mademoiselle "Chivvy" was a case in point.

MADEMOISELLE "CHIVVY."

(Somehow we could never call her Madame.)

Oh, strange mixture of blithesomeness and business ability, what wonderful specimen of modern civilisation have we here? This is a flower fresh from the forcing house, with all the bloom of 150 degrees Fahr. gathered upon it. Listen! You shall hear her speaking that perfect, rippling, curly French which breaks in honeyed accents from the red lips, like the cooing of a hundred doves. And again, strange transformation, she speaks English with a strong American accent. What a change! When I entered the room she was busy with her typewriter. I addressed a remark to her and she replied in a beautifully keen American sample of speech, just savoured with the proper (feminine) nasal twang.

A moment later there entered a friend of hers who speaks French. She launched out into her own language, purring at ease over its splendid syllables.

She explained. It was this way. When still a child of twelve she left Paris, the city of her birth, and crossed the Atlantic. She lived with her relations some seven years in New York, and as a girl had to find her friends among the little girls of that city. She soon picked up the language. Some children learn languages with a sort of admirable facility which is the envy of us grown-ups. Then she returned, in the full bloom of health and youth, to Paris and married at twenty.

Full of wisdom, yet sprightly as a kitten, with the high spirits of a child, she is now able, as the mistress of two of the greatest languages on the earth, to make an excellent living in any office.

You shall find gathered about her all sorts and conditions, listening with equal rapture to the calm flow of these two languages, so essentially different in their characteristics, yet each possessing a certain charm of its own. Which do you prefer? Shall we turn on the tap through which flows so smoothly a perfect and accomplished French, bubbling like liquid streams over the soft sibilants and crystallised here and there with a brilliant accent; or that hard, trim, businesslike language of the American, full of incisive idioms, its tremendous energy tempered a little by a becoming drawl?

On my faith, I have never met any Frenchwoman so interesting as this young lady of Franco-American persuasion, who holds a sort of animated court in the office and surprises casual strangers with her equal grasp of the two widely different tongues.

As I think of it, I owe her something. I was a stranger in Paris and she welcomed me in my own language. More—she had the exquisite patience to listen to my bad French and correct it. Surely the "Entente Cordiale" could go no further!

Ah, mademoiselle!

But I forget. She is married.

April, 9, 1906.

OUR OFFICE.

(Sketch of a certain day in the "Daily Mail" Offices, Rue du Sentier, E/V.)

One by one the night staff come sauntering into the sub-editors' room and sit down among the files. Chivvy is getting restless and wants to know if it is seven.

No, surely not. In the cool well between our windows I hear dropping from on high pleasant sounds. A cheerful bird, caged but tranquil, uplifts its head in warbling song. And some one seems to chop meat at an open window. There is no roaring of traffic, for all our windows look out upon this central well of light, and above is the clear blue sky.

Charles whistles handsomely by the telephone switchboard. The night watchman has looked in, though it is still early for him.

Vita sits alone, drawing Parisian costumes in his dingy and forsaken back room.

For a newspaper office there is certainly a degree of tranquility, unusual and welcome.

One has but to open the window to hear that meat-chopping going on.

And the song of the caged bird mingles with all sorts of careless laughter and idle cooings of the children, who peep from the windows overhead.

Below stairs, in a ghastly, blue light, a single compositor moves about among trays full of type.

A few yards away from this peaceful retreat the life of the great boulevards goes roaring by.

At midnight it is tout-à-fait autre chose, and perhaps the only poetic note is afforded by the file of "Daily Mails," which I turned just now, and which reminded me, as the paper fell crisply to and fro, of the breaking of waves upon a sad seashore.

VERSAILLES.

DISCOVERY OF THE HAMEAU OF MARIE ANTOINETTE.—A WHITSUNTIDE HOLIDAY.

Two perfect days at Versailles. Travelled up and down each day, but spent many happy hours by the leafy "Hameau de Marie Antoinette," making a large water-colour.

The place is thick with gracious historical associations. Every stone reeks of royalty—royalty in a sweet retreat, shut out from the applause of the world, and abandoned to its own delights.

The fish in the stream provide constant amusement: "Oh! le gros, le gros!" cries the little band of French people watching on the rustic bridge, as the fish are fed, and one finny monster comes splashing up amongst the youngsters to grab the pieces of bad bread thrown them.

"Oh! le gros"—as if there was something almost indelicate in the size of these giants as compared with the very small fry who surround them.

What a marvellous mixture of classic art and nature run wild in these vast gardens of Versailles and Trianon!

Here is an architecture which might have been erected by the gods, serving as a set-off and a climbing-place for the wild foliage of Nature—white marble and green trees are reflected in the mirror-like surface of sleepy lakes, o'er which delicate bridges are flung, all twined in creepers of a hundred years.

What a sweet, fresh air, after the heat of Paris! What soft and soothing sounds! The dove and the wood-pigeon dwell lovingly upon their dreamy notes, they hidden in the dark green foliage on high. The grasshopper and the cricket sing in the long grass, close under your feet. The rooks punctuate the buzzing air with grave, decorous voices.

There passed, at eventide, the rushing spirits of dead kings and nigh-forgotten queens. One almost heard the gallop of white horses through the woods, and phantom buglers blowing cunning strains flashed by amongst the thickening shadows.

Dear Queen Marie Antoinette. Thank you, for these so

happy hours, and may we hope that you were very happy, too, sometimes.

June, 1907.

I shall never forget the strange, deep, and beautiful impression made upon me by the first glimpse obtained of the Hameau of Marie Antoinette. Approaching under an avenue of lofty trees, I saw on my left the Temple of Love, its white Corinthian pillars splashed with flakes of brilliant sunshine.

Between the narrow path along which I walked and the delicately designed temple trickled a little stream peopled with the ubiquitous goldfish. I passed on under an avenue of colossal trees, all struck with shadow and brilliant with sunshine, where this last could filter through. Out of this somewhat sombre path I emerged on a beautiful green lawn.

There, far from the sometimes wearisome grandeur of the great Château of Versailles, and removed from the dazzling symmetry of the Great and Little Trianons, stood, all framed in green foliage, the favourite rustic residence of Queen Marie Antoinette.

A glorious picture, a living page torn from the books of history stood before me.

How calm, how almost sacred seemed this scene!

One felt that one was in the presence of the dead Queen—her intimate home life stood displayed before me.

There was something exquisitely pathetic about the attitude of this building, whose beautiful features nature had clothed with her green ivies and purple mosses.

There was something almost human and essentially ladylike in this old building, which seemed to say:

"I verily was, long years ago, the beloved home of that dear Queen. Come and touch these ivies which cling about me, and stand upon the steps of this winding wooden staircase. Here she trod—and here upon the balcony of a soft summer's evening she would lean; and the King would come to see her, riding down yonder dark archway of foliage. Here he found her in her nest, by the calm waters of the lake, and sheltered by the whispering trees."

So the dumb stones of this most lovely house seemed, standing there in the sweet sunshine of June, to speak to us.

I forgot to say that I was labouring under a misapprehension, which, however, only heightened my interest in the Hameau of Marie Antoinette. I thought she was one of the King's favourites, whom he had hidden away down here in this charming retreat, so as to have her all to himself.

I have since improved my knowledge of this history, but

without adding anything to the sum of enchanting sensations which my deplorable ignorance inspired, except, perhaps, that I feel a tearful sorrow for the Queen, because she was snatched away from such an innocent happiness to lose her life in Paris amid the angry roar of the Revolution and the fiery furnace of a people's wrath.

Dear old Hameau!

AT VERSAILLES.

(Shade of Louis XIV. (a gorgeous ruin) emerges from his coffin.)

June 18, 1906.

King: Speak! strangely dressed caitiff, thou black-hatted and unruffled knave. Here my poor corpse has five minutes of royal resurrection! Tell me, in ten words, how stands the world—above all, what of my beloved Versailles?

Greatly changed, your Majesty, I fear me. No, not as to château or gardens. The stones of the one and the fountains of the other live all as orderly and beautiful as ever; but, as to the manner of their using—Sire, I would prefer to hold my peace.

King: Yet speak, for I command it.

Know then, Sire, that the steam tram runs daily to within a few yards of the great courtway of the palace, bringing, as doth also the four-horsed brake, the hydra-headed crowd alway from the station platform to the palace gates. They even, Sire, run about the broad domains, wander within the castle walls, gibing and jeering; looking at pictures, forsooth: or eat their luncheons under the great trees, listing the while to your soft fountain's play.

King: Is't possible! Why, trippers ye call them?

Even so, Sire.

King: What! hath the divine right of kings no virtue! Is there no guard to drive them off, the sacrilegious vermin? Doth God-ordained royalty slumber on its throne?

Fallen, Sire. The people tired of their idol. They found his weight too great to bear upon their shoulders and o'erthrew him. In a sweltering sea of blood the sun of royalty sank down, perchance for ever. They sell official catalogues now, Sire, within the castle precincts and pieces of bread to feed the fish. They hire chairs out at ten centimes each. Yea, a "bateau à l'helice" plies to and fro upon the canal.

King: Hush! no more. Let me be begone. Perish these thoughts. Yet, stay. Methinks there was a favourite spot of mine down by Trianon yonder—(he sighs).

Be easy, Sire. Not a stone is hurt. All has been kept just as you loved to have it.

Exit the King.

A few muffled bars of the "Dead March" and

CURTAIN.

GUIBOUT'S.

Paris, February 10, 1909.

I ought really to write a word about Guibout's liveliest of night restaurants in Place Clichy.

Its real fame arises from the fact that Farrell and I went there and dined off "hors d'œuvres" one night.

Honour bright, that was all we ate, and we drank but a demi-carafe of wine between us.

Holy smoke, how the waiters grinned!

The management knew me as an old customer, but Farrell was in a fair trap. Even his stand-off, reserved, nigger-driving nature broke down at last and he fairly roared as I called for the "addition."

Of course, there was nothing to "add"!

Add to that, that we had not dined badly at all—who that has good appetite can grumble at chopped meat with spiced potatoes, followed by excellent sardines in oil, really delicious salad of celery, a few brief slices of filet de hareng soaked in clear oil, a slice or two of German sausage, some of those red pickled things, and as much bread and butter as you can desire, with yet another palatable dish, to wit, hard-boiled eggs chopped into clean, small fragments with a little pepper on them.

Thank you, garçon! All that is forty centimes in Guibout's. Excellent house.

I care not a rap for yonder smiling ladies, who survey us from behind their champagne bottles (oh, you can do yourself well at Guibout's) with a smile in which amusement is mingled with surprise.

Dear old Guibout's. And what music.

A panorama of faces passes us outside in Place Clichy.

Inside we are cosy.

Well, I promised the dear manager to write him up in the "Herald," but since that was impossible for the moment the above must suffice.

As for the waiter who says "Ah ha!" to me when I enter and grins like a Cheshire cat—well, I suppose he must be

excused. He is probably remembering the "hors d'oeuvre" dinner we took that night when Farrell and myself were so hard up.

Au revoir, waiter. Cheer up, and look forward to a bigger tip next time.

ON THE MÉTROPOLITAIN.

Paris, January 16, 1906.

She made a movement with her pretty head—as though she were going to bite his nose off. If she hadn't been a perfectly pretty girl, labouring under excess of emotion, there would have been an element of absurdity in the movement. As it was—well, I only saw her swan-white neck and perfect profile reach out towards his and he stroked her under the delicate chin.

THE REAL PARIS.

(Extract from letter to G—g—y.)

January 15, 1906.

"In the thickly wooded Bois de Boulogne, the great park of Paris, one may be met any night by ladies clothed only in fur-lined cloaks; who, rushing upon a man, open their cloaks, displaying all their dazzling charms, so that a poor man is sore put to it to escape.

"Again, there are those ladies who walk upon a glass roof, below which men with eye-glasses and upturned heads strut knowingly."

A NEW PIED PIPER.

Charming Scene in the Luxembourg Gardens.

November 4, 1906.

The Pied Piper of Hamelin passed away long ago, leading after him, entranced and bewitched, some of the prettiest children of his generation. But another Pied Piper has come to light. We were strolling through the Luxembourg Gardens last Sunday, just before dusk. The trees, gorgeous in their autumn-coloured costumes, sheltered crowds of happy Parisians, who love the Luxembourg for a Sunday afternoon holiday. There were gallant toy steamboats and sailing ves-

sels moving briskly over the waters of a little lake, their all too brief voyages watched eagerly from the shore by crowds of young and old. A band played charming airs under the trees. But the great event of the evening was yet to come.

At about a quarter to five we noticed a gendarme who seemed to be placing on his station a neat soldier, who stood at attention with a drum and two drumsticks balanced before him. The gendarme waved the crowd away and the soldier commenced to march forward, beating a brisk tattoo on the drum. Instantly the child who was pushing a mechanical toy monkey ceased to be interested in the latter's quaint gesticulations; a girl of four, who towed a large coloured balloon behind her, left her nurse and ran; and a score of other children, rich and poor, hearing the rapid music of the soldier's drum, flew after him. Around the gardens he went and all the children flocked to follow him. He beat a tune which told the closing of the gardens. The hour had come for everyone to leave their several pleasures; but that was the last and greatest pleasure of them all. The soldier looked neither to the right nor to the left. He marched straight forward, with the children all running to keep pace with him. They made a gallant army, that came laughing and rustling through the gardens, the fallen leaves of autumn running before them, and the brave, martial music of the rolling drum brought at every step fresh young adherents to the soldier's flag. The sun was setting by the time the soldier and the children reached the gates. When the drum stopped they clapped their hands to show how they had enjoyed the march.

The signal for the closing of the Luxembourg Gardens was certainly more effective than the shouts of "All out!" which one hears in a London park.

OLD SIGHTS THROUGH NEW EYES.

THE TOMB OF NAPOLEON.

This morning I visited the Tomb of Napoleon. Oh! France, France, how you have failed here, at this great opportunity, to do yourself justice.

No magnificent heroic-sized bronze of Napoleon himself, falling on one knee before the weight of accumulated calamity, his outstretched hands seeming still to ward off utter defeat, while a band of white angels leaning above him offer him, with linked hands, the laurels that belong to the brave.

This huge bronze urn, appalling, desolating in its simplicity—utterly barren of ornament, on which not the humblest flower lies—no, nor even the simplest inscription! And then! the painted floor. The yellow stars that make a cheap design around the ugly urn. Again, the trite, expressionless stone figures who surround the urn. Not one of them has a word of history to say. On the countenance of all is writ the same monotony of line. Better to have had the figures of Napoleon's old and trusted Guard bending the knee around him with some reverence than this quintette of expressionless stone—this seraglio of stern-visaged, unemotional angels, who are neither Amazon nor Venus.

To this tomb come, with bare heads, representatives of all the nations of the world. They lean over the stone balustrade and look down into that cold, cheerless well and, if they have any admiration for the greatest of Emperors, if they are capable of hero-worship, they sigh with grief and disappointment.

Elevated on some steps beyond, and quite detached from the tomb, stands a very noble and heavily-gilt piece of architecture—the richly ornamented architrave being supported on five curly pillars, which shelter beneath them an altar. The whole structure is bathed in the most extraordinary effect of sunshine, as though it were tinged with the rays of a rising or a setting sun. This effect is arrived at by the juxtaposition of two vast and lofty windows of yellow-stained glass, the light falling through which into the interior of the dome burnishes with astonishing éclat various points and promontories here and there of the gilt architecture of this handsome structure.

Entirely detached as it is from the actual tomb of Napoleon, and bearing on it no single inscription which can possibly connect it with the dust of the great Emperor, one is left in doubt as to its actual meaning. Perhaps sufficient excuse for this gorgeous marvel of reflected light is to be found in the very weird effect which it produces when seen from the interior of the Chancel of the Invalides. A great window above the altar of this church permits one to catch a glimpse of the dome of Napoleon's tomb, and through this window floods of dark purple colour vie with splashes of brilliant and awe-inspiring gold, so that one might imagine that the Angel of Death himself stood near by, with folded wings, a light that never was on sea or land testifying to his presence.

December 2, 1906.

The Moulin Rouge is a sort of deception and snare. We can, however, very well forgive it its uninteresting interior for its picturesque exterior. The fact is many people come to a halt when they see the Moulin Rouge for the first time, with its round turret standing up in the night, and its black arms, all lit with yellow lamps, revolving as though pressed by a western breeze. The general impression is that if you go inside you will see more windmill—a huge barn-like room, with pretty girls dressed as miller's daughters dancing on the floor of a clean-swept granary. One would even look to meet the miller—an old fashioned French miller, with spectacles and a white cap and his clothes hanging loosely in folds about him, all covered with white dust. He has a charming smile, and marshals the girls before him as they sweep over the granary floor, their trim ankles a thing of beauty and a joy for ever, and their twinkling feet keeping time to merry music.

NO MILL GIRLS.

There is nothing of this sort inside the Moulin Rouge. In fact, there is no mill inside, though there is a beautiful mill outside. The inhabitants of Montmartre are proud of their mill, lit up at night time, and admired so much by strangers from all parts of the world. But inside one finds only an ordinary music-hall, with tables and chairs, and if you sit down you are forced to order drinks, and a waiter, dressed in the conventional fashion, attends you. There are no mills girls and there is no old miller. Admire, therefore, the Moulin Rouge from without, and do not destroy your fond illusions. We had imagined that by paying an extra franc one could go up in the tower of the mill, escorted thither by a nice mill maiden with trim ankles. We thought one climbed up a rickety staircase, past cobwebs and little slits of windows in the wall. All this is untrue. There is no mill inside the Moulin Rouge.

NO CORN.

There is no corn in this mill. And whoever heard of a mill without corn in it—corn heaped up in huge mountains

in the solemn, shadowy corners of the granary, and which falls down with a soft silvery sound when you shovel it away with the wooden scoop?

We shake the dust of this false mill off our feet and come out, for it is a whited sepulchre.

(Printed in the "American Register,"
Paris, December 2, 1906.)

CHEZ MAXIM'S.

December 2, 1906.

They say that distance lends enchantment to the view, but there are few travellers who are sufficiently philosophical to content themselves with a distant view of the Alps when they may climb to the summit of Mont Blanc—or with an imaginary vision of Maxim's when they can push open the door and, by ordering a whisky and soda, see the gay interior of one of the gayest of the restaurants of Paris.

Here are faces which one sees nowhere else. The faces of the well-bred aristocrats and the figures of the best-dressed men in Paris. Here is a youth already bald-headed, but who, if he has lost his hair, has not lost his charming smile, before which waiters bow down while they hasten to relieve him of his fur-lined overcoat. He is an habitué of the house and casts his money freely upon the waters, careless whether or not it returns to him after many days. All that concerns him is the knowledge that here he may pass some of the most perfect hours of his idle existence amid the most cheerful surroundings. Here is constant and soothing music, soft pictures of lovely nymphs decorate the walls; all that money can buy in the way of costly refreshment will be borne towards him on silver trays and there are an abundance of delicious female forms moving constantly across his smoke-blurred horizon—celebrated beauties, none of whom are, as the French term it, "of a savage virtue," and with whom one can discuss in perfect freedom the absorbing topic of the hour (1.30 a.m.).

Chez Maxim's! Here the waters of Lethe flow full and fast. All these buzzing voices indicate, in their soft and unperturbed tones, that their owners have lost sight of the troubles of existence. The great world of ordinary mortals goes on fighting and struggling outside the glass doors. Within all is blithe and gay—an earthly paradise, peopled by earthly angels. Long live Maxim's, the home of lauhter, wine, and love!

(Above was printed in the "American Register.")

In those remarkable opening stanzas of "Maud," the poet Tennyson, sitting in reflective mood, before the storm of the approaching tragedy gathers on his horizon, seems to survey with his mind's eye the whole vast field of life, marshalling before us in sad array all human crimes and injustice. He passes from the cunning greed of the miser to the violent outrage of the slums, where:

"The vitriol madness flushes up in the ruffian's head,
Till the filthy by-lane rings to the yell of the trampled wife."

But, if wife-beating is less common in Paris than in some other cities of the world, there is at least another horror of the night in the French capital, and this consists of the noise created in the small hours by an exasperated cocher, who is visiting the sins of an economical client upon his unfortunate dumb animal, while the latter wonders why on earth he is suddenly tormented in this fashion for no apparent reason and at an hour when the deserted streets can bring him no relief from sympathetic passers-by.

But there are also as many instances of daylight cruelty and it is to wage war against all this that Mrs. Anna Conover has raised the standard of Protection for Animals in Paris.

Mrs. Conover was born at Copenhagen and, having received her education first at Hanover, then at Stroud in Gloucestershire, and subsequently in Paris, she started on her work well equipped with three languages, to engage single-handed in the herculean task of reforming the cochers of Paris, who, of course, are directly responsible for the cruelties practised on their animals, though these cochers are themselves so badly treated by the managing companies that it is small wonder that they wreak their vengeance sometimes, for a hard and thankless life of toil, on the unfortunate animals in their charge.

Indeed, it has been Mrs. Conover's first care, since she entered upon her campaign against cruelty seven years ago, to inquire, in all cases of cruelty to cabhorses, first into the well-being of the cocher and, by giving him medicine if he is ill or entertaining his children with Christmas dinners and the like amusements, to reach by kindness the heart of the cocher, in the certain hope that such kindness will be understood and appreciated better than mere angry reprimands, and will in course of time be reflected in his own actions towards his horse.

On these lines she has made somewhat of a departure from the ordinary rules laid down by the Society for Protection to Animals in Paris, which seldom takes the trouble to inquire into the lot of the cocher before insisting that he shall treat his horse humanely. I must say, en passant, that my own experience with this society has not been a happy one. I was one day passing down the Rue du Faubourg Saint Honoré, close to the British Embassy, when, as I approached No.—of that street, I heard a noise emanating from a poultry shop which resembled that sound which masons make when they are scraping a wall. As I passed before the shop I noticed that fowls were being plucked alive, hence the excruciating shrieks which proceeded with monotonous reiteration from the interior of the establishment. I thought this would be a good case where a couple of officers of the Société Protectrice des Animaux could swoop down there and then upon the offender, who was a young man, surrounded by other shop assistants. I immediately telephoned to the offices of the society, but was told that it was their lunch hour, and that therefore they could not be expected to come round. They said they would send someone in the course of the afternoon. I replied angrily that that would be far too late as the whole basket of fowls would by that time have been plucked. To my certain knowledge they never sent round at all. I presently entered the shop, but the barbarity was already at an end, and the shopman of course assured me that I had been mistaken in my surmise and that the fowls were dead. I am not an officer of the society, and had neither time nor authority to proceed further in the matter, but I mention this case as fully bearing out Mrs. Conover's statement that the staff of the society, who are paid to prevent this sort of thing, are generally to be found smoking cigarettes with their legs on the office mantelpiece, or lounging around doing nothing, if, indeed, they are to be found on the premises at all. I know one or two "Herald" men out of a job who are trying to get a berth in this easy-going office.

A letter which I subsequently addressed to the "New York Herald" on the matter was not printed, and Captain Hutt, of that paper, told me that they had been uncertain whether to use the letter or not, as complications with the poultry shop might have ensued.

Mrs. Conover lost a champion of her cause when the late John Hollingshead, the renowned manager of the Gaiety Theatre in London, died. He was a man of enormous activity and wide experience. He inquired carefully into her methods of working, and subsequently made a public state-

ment that she was doing more practical work, without receiving any outside help, than most of the existing societies put together. He therefore lent his pen to tell the world of animal lovers how hard Mrs. Conover had worked, spending her own money in the cause of the poor, overworked horses of Paris, starting a Band of Mercy for Parisian children, paying all the necessary expenses out of her own pocket, and founding, above all, the "Union Fraternelle de Cochers de Paris," which now numbers thousands of cochers among its members. Their motive for joining this union may sometimes be a selfish one, but that is not for us to decide.

Mrs. Conover is a well-known personality to all lovers of animals in Paris. She works on her own lines, and is not herself a society, but she is always glad to answer all questions as to her work, her projects, and her experience, and visitors to her rooms in 16, Rue Louis-David out at Passy, will find her reprimanding passing cochers or handing them liniments for their horses through the bars of the window on the ground floor. It has even been rumoured that thirsty cabmen draw up here now and again for a glass of beer. A coachman known for cruelty, however, will not have a ghost of a chance in this direction, and will be as relentlessly driven away as the donkeys which Betsy Trotwood warned off her Green.

THE SAME DOG.

(A Paris Idyll.)

A long, brown dog—a sort of a hound—met me, hurrying in the opposite direction.

He looked, also, as if he had been sent down by the British Chamber of Commerce to look after a job of Fr. 30 weekly instead of the 50 or 75 he was earning.

The same worried, breathless look, the same rapid footsteps.

"Ships that pass in the night," I thought to myself, as we both simultaneously dodged a baker's cart that came clattering over the cross-roads, and the dog's eye met mine in one brief comprehensive glance.

So human did he seem to me as we passed without any other greeting than a look, that the thought came immediately to my mind: "What more am I than this dog, and how can I tell what he knows that I do not know, and how much he thinks that I think also?"

LETTER ADDRESSED BY THE AUTHOR TO THE "EVENING STANDARD."

May 9, 1906.

DEAR SIR:

For the last twelve months I have lived in Paris, and as a friend of animals (as I hope most good Englishmen are) was of course just as horrified and disgusted as crowds of others, to see how the horses are treated in this otherwise charming city. Those who have ever seen horses at their best, stepping proudly out of the stables on a glorious autumn morning on their way to the hunting field, every sense alert, and listening with eagerness to the music of the horn and the hounds; those who have ever owned and cared for a horse of their own, making him a friend and a companion in long cross-country rambles, must see with horror in our great cities the miserable specimen of a once noble type, the helpless slave who, tied and bound to a heavy tram or taximétre, absolutely incapable of retaliation, trots over the hard-paved roads all day and sometimes all night at the mercy of a drunken driver. The cocher of Paris visits upon his unfortunate beast all the sins of those fares who do not pay him in a sufficiently generous fashion. In fact, if the cocher has anything to grumble at he takes it out by whipping his horse. The cocher, being often in a state of semi-intoxication, lets his horse know how jovial he feels by giving him an extra dose of lashes. Late the other night I came across a cocher outside a small café. He was stroking his horse's head. Blood was flowing from the animal's mouth. The cocher while on his box had been vindictively tugging at the bit for want of better employment. He was now varying the exercise by commiserating in his drunken fashion with the horse's misfortune.

Now people do not come all the way over from America and England to see such scenes as this. They often spend their hardly-earned savings by coming away for a holiday, and if they are in the least sensitive to the sufferings of dumb beasts, Paris, as a show, is very often entirely spoilt by the wanton cruelty yhich it exhibits. Why should the more refined among travellers, and those who spend their money (often lavishly, if they happen to be rich) in passing through Paris, have their holiday spoilt in this way? If Paris chooses to set up, as she does, as a playground for people of all the different nations of the world, let her carry the thing through properly, and not mar the spectacle by

something which can be stopped instantly, if she desires to stop it.

There is only one way to stop cochers from ill-treating and under-feeding their horses, and that is to *stop* them. It is no good, to my mind, giving them printed tracts which appeal to their sense of humanity (a sense which many of them unfortunately do not possess) or imploring them to consider their poor dumb horses. We are dealing here with a class of men who like to see educated people implore them to do something which they have no intention of doing. Why pet a semi-intoxicated cocher? Why talk persuasively to a criminal? Suppose that we adopt this method with the other crimes, besides cruelty. Suppose that we implore pickpockets, who murder and rob us, to give up their bad ways for the Lord's sake, should we get our watches back? It is because the *law* is not behind them that agitators for humanity to animals over here are the laughing-stock of their enemies. Here we have to do with a huge cab-owning institution, which is part and parcel of the City's life, owning in the aggregate thousands and thousands of taximétres and other carriages, and we talk of giving tracts to coachmen in order that they shall spare the backs of their skinny horses. The fact is that unless the law can be made to stir itself in the matter, we are powerless to check this systematic and day by day cruelty. These horses who can scarcely stand will still be forced to trot. These poor animals who are obliged to take their sleep standing will still be whipped up if they fall on the ground, and all these and other unheard-of cruelties will continue until a committee of inspection is organised in Paris by the law, a committee comprising veterinary surgeons who will be empowered to examine into the conditions under which horses are worked and to visit repeated offenses of the cochers with imprisonment.

Cochers are not children. They have arrived at an age when it is no longer possible (even if it were desirable) to teach them good manners with soft words and humanity with kind promises. A recent tract published in Paris regarding cruelty to horses mentioned that since cochers always take off their hats when a funeral cortège goes by, they could be taught a similar respect for the feelings of dumb animals. But cochers were taught when they were children to take their hats off to hearses and they were not taught to care for dumb animals. Here is where the law should step in and Parisians would do well to frame that law and agitate for it, for upon the influx of visitors a great part of the prosperity of Paris is beginning to depend.

Could horses speak, all they said would instantly be lis-

tened to with rapt attention. They would immediately form themselves into trade unions and get a great deal of the traffic management into their own "hands." They would tell a sorry story as to long hours, the lash, insufficient food, leaky and ill-ventilated stables; and a deputation of lame and skinny horses would at once be received by the President of the Republic, who would hear patiently all they had to say. The horses would elect from among themselves Labour Members to represent them in the Nations' Parliaments. But since horses cannot speak, the least we can do is to speak for them.

We all remember how strange we felt when first visiting a foreign people, not one word of whose language we understood. If we were in any difficulty or trouble what an immense annoyance it was not to be able to express ourselves. Yet this is the permanent condition of our four-footed friends and through no fault of their own.—Yours, etc.

. . . . . .

Our attention was attracted a few days ago to a short letter on what many people are fond of calling "an old topic," but which is none the less painful reading. The writer of the letter described the agonising struggles before a jeering crowd of a horse which had had its legs broken by an accidental explosion in the streets, and which had been for four hours plunging about in pools of blood waiting for somebody to come and put it out of its misery. An agent of police told the writer who had witnessed this scene that one was not permitted to kill it, and a pharmacien near by refused to telephone to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Is it really necessary that the inhabitants of a civilised city should be obliged to witness from their windows a spectacle of such callous and cruel barbarity? We presume the pharmacien in question thought himself entitled to watch this scene till its bitter end, and therefore resented any interference on the part of the person who requested him to telephone for somebody to put an end to the sport.

Surely English and American visitors to Paris, who spend a great deal of their money in that city, should have some voice in the matter. Has M. Lepine no power in cases of this sort? Soft and ladylike pleading is lost upon those who promote and enjoy such spectacles as these, and the iron hand of the law can alone teach them the lesson of humanity. Four hours after the explosion we are told that "the poor animal is trying to stand up—and a jeering crowd is staring at it."

. . . . . .

AT THE PARIS ZOO.

MISSING LINK REFLECTIONS.

We differ from the other animals by reason of our immense disregard for natural disadvantages, our sublime indifference to our smallness of stature, and a studied ignorance of our appalling resemblance to the apish tribes, especially the large gorilla.

In any creatures of less mental and moral force than ourselves this unheard-of and frightful resemblance to the monkey would have daunted all effort, and led us back, crushed and brow-beaten, into the savage life of the forests.

Some of our cleverest men, especially those who, ilke Darwin and the French scientist whose life-like statue occupies a prominent position in the Jardin des Plantes, bear in their features all the traits of enlightened monkeydom. The lines of the brow take on a sort of spiritual emphasis, it is true, but the direction of those lines if often purely and simply those of the monkey, and the piercing eyes of the man of genius, though evidencing merely, we know, a hunger for knowledge, have an effect exactly similar to those of the monkey who hungers for nuts.

In the face of such a deplorable and humiliating likeness we have nevertheless made ourselves masters of the globe, and, with a sort of restless enthusiasm of energy, we have sent out over the surface of all oceans the great ships whose iron-clad prows furrow the still or raging waters of the solitary deep. We have spanned hideous chasms of Nature's awful making with our bridges, across which rock trains which run from one continent to another.

There is very little of the monkey about this. But our physical resemblance to the monkey remains. The monkey himself, long-haired, ravenous, chattering, is still swinging from branch to branch of the primæval forest, chattering angrily at the approach of our trans-continental trains, cracking the huge nuts to get at the kernels; sometimes falling dead, pierced to the heart by the bullets of our invincible guns.

We did wisely to get away as far as possible from the monkey, in conversation, in dress, in convention. Our visiting cards, the very pipes we smoke, the collars and frock-coats we wear, our cricketing flannels, even our motoring costumes (quaint though these latter are) have placed a huge and impassable gulf between us and the monkey.

Small in ourselves, our weapons are tremendous. Language, and the art of writing down speech and building

from it argument, philosophies and mathematics, these have placed us and our hairy ancestors (if such they be) miles apart.

The primitive instincts remain. But they have small room for growth, crushed under the complex machinery of civilisation. Jealousy, passion, murder, the habit of stealing, secrecy, inordinate love of food, all these taints we may thank the monkey for. Against them we have set up:

(1) The criminal law (a most complicated and therefore terrifying piece of machinery).

(2) Religion, appealing to the Unknown and Ideal, and looking over the head of the savage and the animal.

(3) The laws of society, good form, high moral tone, etc., with, as punishment for breaking rules, boycotting.

Between these civilised systems the monkey gets no room to breathe. He is stifled out of us.

Even if, as nations, we fight, we are far above the vulgar monkey, both in our weapons, our high ideal of honour, our Red Cross rules and observances, the whole organisation of our army.

The very dividing of ourselves into sects and peoples and nations, with all our international laws of give and take, is a thing incomprehensible of any society of monkeys in the world.

It is because the monkey has allowed himself to be left so far behind us that we meet him face to face in the Zoo, with iron bars between us and these our distinguished if somewhat villainous-looking ancestors.

. . . . . .

A LITTLE CRUELTY TO ANIMALS.

Another thing which at the same time interested and pained me at the Paris Zoo was the heron cage The herons were all right. I guess they stood on one leg, in beautiful form, in full storky style. But there were some gentlemen in the cage with exceptionally long and sharp-pointed beaks, and small, bead-like eyes, whose wings, of a considerable size as wings go, were snow-white, but whose legs were by no means so yard-and-a-half long as the herons'. These snow-white and long-beaked birds were occupied in chasing around and around, in the narrow limits of the bird run, a party of fluffy yellow ducklings, whose mother, the old grey duck, was defending her innocent offspring as best she could against these unwarrantable attacks of the tall gen-

tlemen in white. This grave quartette of worthies fixed their inquiring bead-like eyes especially upon the red-raw back of one poor little duckling, and now and again they made haste to give it a sharp and sudden dig with their foot-long bills, against which the mother-duck was quite defenceless. Yet she wagged her short tail savagely whenever the attacks occurred. Unfortunately, her tail was quite harmless, and this the white gentlemen knew. The mother-duck faced all four of them boldly, with an expostulatory movement of the head, as she turned to look from one to the other of her persecutors. These, however, made haste to annoy her again, and the sore, raw-backed duckling got separated from the rest of the mother-duck's family, and when I left the show it was being cruelly dug at by the four pointed bills of the white gentlemen. Its back was raw and bleeding.

Could anything more horrible and cruel be imagined than this herding of a defenceless duck and her six young children in a cage of powerful wild birds, armed with the weapons and instincts of vultures, whose constant amusement was to harry and pester the poor old mother and her defenseless young? What a hideous childhood! What a torture to maternity!

I further remarked, as I always do in public Zoos, the ill-effects of herding together in constant close companionship even like and like.

The two otters, frisking and splashing in their circular pool, are evidently sick of one another's company. One of them makes savage attempts to bite the other in the back. But the years roll on. They are still and always shut together in the same narrow pool. Their fury and resentment increase according to the months or years of their enforced companionship. The one barks petulantly at the other, chasing him round and round the disturbed pool. The waves slap at the stone rim and subside. At last the silent otter snaps at his barking companion, and the latter refrains from annoying, but only for a moment. The sickening circular chase begins again. And it will continue to-morrow and to-morrow.

Thus man sets one beast against the other, by shutting the two up in a narrow space, from which neither of them has any escape from the other's nauseating company.

The bears, sprawling on their backs and catching crumbs of bread, are comical enough.

"Oh, le gros Martin!" shrieks delighted childhood.

But one of these bears lies in the corner alone, guarding with his paw a huge red sore on his nose, which the flies constantly torture.

From time to time a spasm shakes his huge body, and he never joins with the others, who play up to the gallery.

The black bear, after years of confinement, is beginning slowly to die in the pit. But he is still on exhibition, and will remain on exhibition till he dies.

THE SURPRISES OF THE HILL.

(Criticism of an article—written by a Lady-sportsman—which appeared in the "Westminster Gazette" of Saturday, September 1, 1906.)

Poor stag—and what hideous thing is this in skirts, which brings into that realm of glorious freedom a figure more gaunt and ugly than herself—the figure of Death. Death, on the life-giving hills, invading the dry heather and the nestling ferns with blood.

Bring up yonder, under the suns and mists of heaven, the slaughterhouse of man.

To hear this bony, heartless woman prate of the charm of it all!

Sleek, sly murderess, whose feet press forward to destruction, and whose "soul" is swift unto death.

She is permitted to tell a collection of Christian readers how the joy of life mounted up into her heart, as she tramped it over the hills, with these two lean old fossils, uneducated men of the lower class, fit company for this "educated lady" and anxious to receive her dole of silver.

Poor stag!

Not one note of her description strikes true. For those who thirst so much after death cannot love nature. She is trying to hide under a silken network of soft words the ugly weapons of slaughter, and one sees, behind the pretended admiration of the handiwork of God, her face with its lean strained lips, cruel eyes, and chalk-white cheeks streaked with ugly crimson and fired with the desire to be in at the death.

She is a good shot, too. And that is so wonderful in a woman!

"Shoot straight, sweet maid, let those who can be clever——"

She also seems to be inordinately proud of her long legs. We confess we only see in them the vehicle of so much hypocrisy.

THE SIGN-POST.
(After Bunyan.)

March 26, 1906.

Behold, I dreamed a dream!

For there was a man with a bundle, and he walked along a dark road singing.

Now and again his song would stop, and he would start a-cursing and a-swearing like the very devil at the woes of the road. And again the road was bright and burning hot, and still he toiled on. Then again he fell to heartily grumbling, and did create such an uproar that somebody eased him of his burden a little.

And lo, just then, he came unto a sign-post. Now the mind of this man was not in any way made up, and his heart was set on many different things. He touched divers trades with a careless hand, and passed on, leaving all incomplete. And he would grumble and so forth.

Now here was a sign-post set right in his road. And he must needs choose the right or the left—nay, there were about three roads branched off there, leading the Lord knew whither.

No man stood at the post to shout which was the good or which was the bad road. For had fifty men stood there all shouting their loudest, what could it avail, since each passenger must choose his own way, for good or for ill.

Time was when a score of advisers stood by the sign-post, each shouting different advice.

But a strong man, coming up one day, whipped them all away and, moreover, tore up the sign-post bodily by its roots and carried it away on his shoulder, as he marched off in the night down the middle road. "For," said he, "what matters it to me which road I take, so long as I go forward? And there be those weaker vessels passing this way who will miss this post and sit down and weep at it. And more—lo! near by is the black Pool of Indecision, now full of corpses of men who have fallen trembling under the sign-post, men infirm of purpose who dreaded this and that road equally, and to stay their misery plunged into the black pool."

But an enemy had reset the sign-post in its accustomed place, and there it stood, labelled: "The Right Road, The Left Road, The Middle Road." For it said not a word as to where either of these roads led.

And the grumbler aforesaid came on with his pack and he sat down under the post and began to mourn.

And as I watched, lo! a man with a proud step and the

star of hope on his forehead came along brightly and cast a quick eye on the roads. And he took the middle; "For," said he, "so far as I am concerned, all roads lead to Heaven. May God bless this one to me." And he went out into the night; and I heard him cry a little further along the road, where it swept upwards to the hill: "Look yonder—for the lights of Heaven shine."

Then came another, running along the great highway, and he scarcely spied the sign-post at all. He was an idealist, and behind him a score of knaves with iron whips ran, switching them lustily. He had hired these knaves so as to make his pace quicker. He flew by the sign-post like lightning, never even looking up to see what was writ upon it. And to this day, I swear, he does not know a sign-post stood there. He vanished; with all his knaves racing after him in clouds of dust, up the hill. And I heard afterwards that he found on the brow of the hill his ideal.

Just at this moment I heard a plunge as of a man sunk for ever in deep water.

And lo, the dark Pool of Indecision swallowed up the man with the burden, so that he grumbled no more.

CHRISTMAS IN FRANCE.

This is the time
When the belfry chime
Puts sorrow to shame.
Let all who've a wish
For a savoury dish
Just give it a name.

A truce to folly,
Let's all be jolly
The while the bells ring.
God knows every heart
Can contribute a part
To the song they sing.

E. B. P.

All through the year an Englishman may go easily enough in Paris, rejoicing on his way. But at Christmas there comes, with a quiver of recollection, a sound that reaches him across the Channel, through fog, smoke, and dirty weather, through frost-laden atmosphere and across snowy fields—the sound of the chiming of Christmas bells.

Those who have ever known an old-fashioned English Christmas, in an English village, where the old customs have not died out, where the "waits" and the carol-singers come on Christmas Eve, all in grotesuqe masks, to sing under the stars the sweet and quaint old chants, some of which form part of the ancient history of England; those who have seen the school children entertained at Christmas with a huge tree, all lit with candles, and the branches of which are swaying up and down under the weight of heavy presents; those who have heard through the crisp air of a Christmas morning the long, plaintive, and beautiful music of the chimes which come floating from the belfry of the village church and have seen the villagers passing up under the yew trees into their beloved house of worship, there to sing in one accord the Christmas hymns—are never likely to forget an English Christmas.

The children of course are glad enough when all these services and functions are over. They love to run free over the countryside and gather holly for the humble homes. And the children of the rich are being driven, in such fantastic and beautiful dresses of white lace and blue silk, to children's Christmas parties—which many older people love much better than the formal dinner parties of ordinary occasions. All is mirth and merriment. Through the night and across the crisp, soft snow, roll almost noiselessly, along the country lanes, the carriages of the rich. There are laughing faces of children inside. The boughs of the trees under which they pass are glistening with frost. There is a children's dance at the great Manor Hall.

Carriage after carriage is rolling through the park gates. At the door of the mansion a flood of light makes the white snow sparkle like a Christmas card.

Inside—holly, mistletoe, and a buzz of happy voices—a great polished drawing-room in which can dance 200 children picked from the best families of the countryside. A magnificent dinner table is provided in another room for the little gourmands. But there are plenty of children who would rather dance than eat. And this charming maiden of eight will find as many partners as she wants. She looks like an angel. She is dressed all in white. Her lisping voice would tame savage lions.

But come into this café. We are in Paris—not in England. The music and the laughter die away. "Garçon—un bock, s'il vous plait."

There is no Christmas to speak of in France.

THE SPIRIT OF MOVING.

The Spirit of Moving is a charitable Spirit. I can testify to that, because some of the most interesting trifles I possess have fallen into my hands when a human tree was shaking on its foundations—in other words, when a man was moving to a new abode. That charity which is inspired by the Spirit of Moving is not altogether a virtuous charity. It arises rather from the fact that the man who is moving feels that his life is over-burdened with trifles. He has opened up many long-closed cupboards, taken the lids off dusty boxes, and disturbed hiding-places which have been sealed as sacred by the cobwebs of long years. As the accumulated treasures poured forth from these various recesses, he has been confronted with the fact that he is the owner of an appalling quantity of what comes perilously near being rubbish. For a moment he loses his distinguishing power. His sense of the value of things becomes confused. He sees before him the absolute necessity of casting overboard a part of these long-stored treasures, which will encumber his new rooms, and which, by their quantity, if not by their quality, will bring an amused smile to the face of his new landlady or concierge. So he begins giving away.

A friend happens to have dropped in to see him, and as this friend sits down and meditatively lights his pipe, inquiring the meaning of this great turning-out of drawers and cupboards, which have thrown up their contents upon the table, as the sea after a stormy night casts up its treasures upon the shore, he is told by the Mover that it is a move.

Now, this friend is not altogether a fool. He has called in by chance, it is true. But it is also true that he knows how to make use of an opportunity when he meets one. He begins to cast an eye upon the treasures and to handle the same affectionately. "What a pretty pipe!—real meerschaum, I suppose?" he asks, innocently enough.

"I believe so," says the Mover. "Take it if you care for it—I never smoke it. It was given to me by (—) I forget whom, really. Take it. There's such a litter of things. Do you think you could help me to close this bag?"

"This bag will never close unless you take that case of razors out of it."

The Mover (after some tugging): "I believe you are right. Take it out."

The Visitor: "By the way, these razors are interesting. The handles are carved somewhat in the Japanese style, is it not so?"

The Mover: "Oh, do you care for the razors? Do pray take them, and this cursed bag will perhaps consent to close."

(The razors are put in the pocket of the visitor.)

So it goes on. At last all the Mover's trunks are packed, and the friend, with his pockets and his arms full, says good-bye.

The Mover: "Good-bye, my dear friend, you have helped me to pack—always an annoying business. Come and see me next week in my new rooms. John, call a cab for this gentleman. Good-night, old man. You will be home in half an hour."

The visitor clears off. "God bless you in your new home," he says. And he proceeds on his way, a happier and a wealthier man.

This sad-faced visitor always puts in an opportune appearance when he hears that one of his friends is moving. He comes with the proper funeral aspect, just as the waits arrive with a hearse. That is why his room is full of rare and costly curios—old Arabian daggers, paintings by Rubens, real ivory paper knives, delicately chiselled—the overflow from many a packer's wealth.

THE ANT.

April 27, 1906.

The other day I was astonished to hear, in the ordinarily quiet and decorous café where I go at four o'clock to take my "lait chaud" (because the French tea is so often abominable), a great noise, and to see the garçons running with looks of agitation; while above a glazed screen the florid head of the wife of the patron slowly rose, sun-like, into the sphere of general curiosity.

A man, with a somewhat bronzed face, had laid down his "Figaro" before him on the table. He still grasped with his left hand the long stick to which this newspaper was always attached; but with his other hand he gesticulated violently, pointing a withering finger at something which three garçons, bent like wind-swept corn before his wrath, were straining their eyes to see. The Englishman (for so his slight accent pronounced him) was declaring that surely it was an extraordinary thing that he, fresh arrived from an expedition which had reached from the East Coast of Africa the densest interior of that continent—that he, who had suffered from snake-bites, who had fallen prone under the paw of the gorilla, who had been teased nightly by the

poisonous mosquito and swept down half dead upon a couch of wet reeds, by the devastating malaria, should not, after reaching through all perils the shores of an established civilisation, be plagued in a public café by the appearance of a hideous insect which even at that moment was crossing slowly from an article on the state of the strikers at Lenz into a paragraph dealing with some horrible drama of low life.

A man on my left summed up the whole situation in a nutshell.

"There are none so fastidious," said he, "as those who have lived for a while outside the pale of civilisation; none so ultra-refined as those who have just ceased to be savage."

At that moment the man holding the "Figaro" fell into a fresh paroxysm of rage and, flicking the unfortunate ant into the air (for it was none other than this harmless and industrious specimen of the insect world which had been tasting the sweets of literature for a few brief moments), he laid about him with a will, and, scattering the unfortunate waiters right and left, bounced from the shop, a monumental example of a man who, fresh escaped from the gigantic savagery of the jungle, takes the slightest departure on the part of human events from the beaten path of strict decorum as a gross and intentional insult to himself.

Revolving this strange philosophy in my mind, I paid for my hot milk, and walked thoughtfully away.

The old savage in us will out, even though it come under the guise of a rebellion against savagery.

THE GREAT ROOM.

July 27, 1906.

I saw a great room, with windows of a rich colour, through which the sun poured. Oaken bookcases lined the lofty walls, and thousands and thousands of costly volumes stood on the shelves. Here and there, on a niche of stone, or a table beautifully inlaid, stood a work of art, rare and costly—a piece of sculpture, alabaster-white, a painting of priceless beauty.

The vast chamber, lit with shafts of light, gave one at once the sense of awe and of admiration. The ancient oak rafters of the roof, standing forth naked in all their strength, were splashed with shafts of blue light, and again others lost themselves in blackness.

There was no sign of life. All these books, the result of

so much learning, stood mute and dumb on their shelves. The sculptured fauns and fairies lifted themselves in all attitudes of graceful silence, and their lips seemed parted in the effort to speak.

But one heard no voice or sound.

At last I espied, far down the room, seated in a magnificent oak chair like a throne, the figure of an old and wrinkled man. He was reading one of the books that belonged to his great library. He never lifted his head as he read. A thoughtful smile rested upon his face.

I felt that the great room was no longer empty, was no longer a tomb of dead writings and dusty manuscripts. For there sat there, in the midst of the silence, the man with the brain which worked.

INTERVIEW WITH M. T. HOMELLE, DIRECTOR OF THE LOUVRE.

The following article, resulting from a personal interview which I had with M. Homelle, was offered by me to the "New York Herald" and refused. I then handed it to Burlingham, a philosopher, who, without changing a single word of my MS., kindly secured its immediate acceptance, the day following its refusal by Mr. Gordon Bennett.

M. Homelle's readiness to grant me a long interview in his private residence may be explained by the fact that I presented my card as one of the students of the atelier Merson in the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. M. Homelle's first words to me were: "Monsieur Merson is an intimate friend of mine. You are welcome. Come in, and I will tell you what I can about the Louvre."

Tuesday, December 17, 1907.

"We don't want to clean our pictures as they clean them in Berlin," said M. T. Homelle, of the Ministry of Fine Arts, and director of the Louvre Museum, when I saw him yesterday at his residence under the Pavillon Mollien adjoining the Musée du Louvre. "I know all about the Kaiser's Gallery in Berlin, and there is no doubt whatever that they clean their pictures far too much. True, the dirt is removed by this process, but who is to say that the varnish is not also destroyed, which leaves the naked paint open to the corroding influence of the air."

"Are the pictures regularly dusted?" I asked.

"Well, we cannot entrust an army of guardians with the

task of daily flapping and flicking at these priceless pictures with dusters, as we should order a domestic to go and dust our furniture daily. Great damage would thus be done. From time to time the surface dust is carefully removed from the pictures. By constantly beeswaxing the floors we keep the dust from accumulating in the galleries of the museum."

"What about the dingy frames?" I next asked.

"Now, Mr. Duveen mentions that these frames need renewing, but this is a task which must necessarily be accomplished by degrees. We began last year with the Rembrandts, which were all placed in new frames, and naturally this makes the contrast with the old ones all the stronger. We shall proceed to reframe the other pictures by degrees. But this is an enormous task, involving a great expense, and we shall certainly not consider frames when the question of purchasing a valuable picture arises. We shall give preference to the possession of the work of art—even in an old frame!"

"Is it true," I asked, "that many priceless pictures by Old Masters are stored away unseen in the vaults of the Louvre?"

"We have some fine pictures thus stored," was the reply. "But—qu'est-ce que vous voulez! There is not room for all. Mr. Duveen, like many other critics, if he found himself face to face with the double problems of expense and space for pictures which constantly confront us, would be considerably staggered."

(Leaving M. Homelle, I now pursued my inquiries in another direction, which he kindly indicated to me.)

In the absence of M. Leprieur, the conservator of the pictures as well as of the frames in the Louvre, M. Jean Guiffrey, who represents M. Leprieur, made the following statement to me:

"There are two methods of cleaning or renovating valuable pictures. The first is simply to remove the entire coat of varnish, and lay the painting bare. In thus removing the varnish it is practically impossible to avoid removing some of the paint with it, because the varnish of a picture which has become mellow has mingled to a certain extent with the paint. Not only is this the case, but we have to face the fact that the surface of a painting is almost always uneven. Here and there the paint is thicker than in other parts. There are (to use the French word) 'empâtements,' where the paint stands out sometimes a quarter of an inch

from the rest of the surface. It is absolutely impossible to remove the coat of varnish uniformly in such cases, and these projections of paint have to come off. For this reason we do not care about removing the varnish and exposing the painting which lies underneath, as they do in Berlin.

"The second manner of preserving and renewing the surface of a painting consists in putting another layer of varnish on the old one. This certainly results, after four coats of varnish, in a yellowness of tone being imparted to the whole painting. But we do not find this disagreeable. Much of the beauty which is admired in Rembrandts, for instance, is sometimes caused by this yellowness or mellowness of tone.

"As for dusting the pictures, we cannot dust them with cloths nor with feather dusters. Cloths are too hard, and feather dusters, when one of the feathers happens to break, scratch a painting terribly. We dust them with cotton-wool, which is sufficiently soft to cause no injury."

THE LOUVRE PICTURES.

SOME UNPUBLISHED NOTES RESULTING FROM A PRIVATE INTERVIEW WITH M. G. BERGER, DEPUTY, MEMBRE DE L'INSTITUT, PRESIDENT DE LA SOCIETE DES AMIS DU LOUVRE.

December 18, 1907.

On Tuesday night I interviewed at his residence in the Rue Legendre, Paris, Monsieur G. Berger, Deputy, Membre de l'Institut, and Président des "Amis du Louvre." Seated in his magnificent private library, surrounded by tapestries, sculpture, paintings, and rare editions of French masterpieces, richly bound, this gentleman gave me his views on the subject of the Louvre Museum pictures, the conservation of their colours, and their new frames.

"First of all," said Mr. Berger—"and you only find me in my library at this hour because I am not feeling so well as I might—I may say that the interesting article published in the 'Herald' of Tuesday last entirely omits to mention the important question of glazing the pictures or hanging them without glass.

"It has been found absolutely necessary to glaze the pictures in the National Gallery of London, because the atmosphere of that city is often heavily charged with an actually

gritty fog, which would destroy the surface of any painting in a short time.

"Here in the Louvre we have very few of our paintings under glass. An exception is the 'Joconde' of Leonardo da Vinci—one of that great painter's most marvellous works, but it has not been a satisfactory solution of the problem, because under glass the picture looks like a large mirror, and is full of unexpected and puzzling reflections.

"On the question of varnish the remarks printed in the 'Herald' interview with M. Homelle with regard to the tone given by four coats of varnish over a Rembrandt, are quite correct, but I may tell you that we cannot put several coats of varnish on a Rubens, because Rubens painted on a prepared groundwork of a reddish tint, and if we varnish his canvases the result is quite impossible.

"The whole question of the preservation of pictures is a most difficult one. They must perish in time.

"As for the Société des Amis du Louvre, of which I am president, I will only mention that, though I founded this society only five or six years ago, we now have 2,546 members, each paying the annual subscription of 20 francs, and that we have already expended 350,000 francs in the purchase for the galleries of the Louvre Museum of paintings, tapestries, and statues.

"Our latest acquisition, for which we paid 18,500 francs, is a splendid eighteenth century Ecuelle, or ancient soup tureen, which was made by Thomas Germain, the celebrated orfèvre, and which bears the arms of Carnidal Farnèse, who presented it to the Pope. This beautiful work of art can now be seen in the Louvre. The committee of our society decides on the purchase of these articles.

"All the members of our society have special privileges afforded them. They can obtain entrance into private museums all over the Continent, and special facilities of observation are granted them by the Conservators of Art Galleries.

"It may be interesting to mention that in 1793 the 'Convention Nationale' decided that the Louvre should belong, in its entirety, to the Beaux-Arts. On the strength of this former decision I have been constantly demanding the expulsion of the Ministre des Colonies from the Louvre, that we may have more room for our art treasures. The Ministre des Colonies is now moving into a new habitation. An ancient convent in the Quartier St. Germain (Institution des Frères de la Doctrine Chrétienne, Rue Oudinot), Paris, is being repaired to accommodate him, and within a year hence we shall be able to occupy his apartments and offices.

"The Ministre des Finances will next have to go. I am constantly renewing my applications in the Chamber for this expulsion, and I am within my rights owing to the ancient decree of the Convention Nationale.

"We have a special reason for wishing to obtain possession of the space in the Louvre now belonging to the Ministre des Finances. In this very portion of the Louvre there is a usine, or plant, for the manufacture of electricity for the lighting of that part of the building which he and his staff occupy. In order to produce this electricity there are machinery and boilers which emit a very black smoke charged heavily with soot, which, penetrating into the windows of that portion of the Louvre, where the Picture Galleries are situated, can cause great damage to these works of art, just as does the soot-charged air of London in the case of your National Gallery pictures.

"When the Ministre des Finances has gone, the whole of the Louvre will be devoted to the preservation of the national collection of works of art.

"By the way, I notice that they do not lose pictures in the London National Gallery by theft at anything like the rate we do here."

These remarks terminated the interview, and, taking leave of my genial host, I descended his marble staircase and emerged into the starlit night, a wiser, but not necessarily a sadder man.

CONAN DOYLE AND THE FRENCH.

October, 1906.

"I do not fear God if He knows all," said an ordinary sinner who has become famous. But those are greatly to be feared who know only half. The "Figaro" in a delightful and very temperate article dealing with the translation into French of a certain book by Conan Doyle, the hero of which is an idiotic, sometimes heroic, funny Frenchman, quotes the above remark, apropos of those writers of any nation who discuss the peculiarities of another race than their own, before having even lived among those whom they attempt to describe.

Conan Doyle's hero is a certain Frenchman, by name Colonel Gérard. And what an idiot this colonel is! He never manages to grasp the true sense of any of his surroundings. Fascinated with his own admiration of himself, he believes that everybody else is admiring him. But it is especially among the English that he makes himself the

laughing-stock of all. He comes to England and takes part in a fox-hunt, and manages to shoot the fox, and when expressions of indignation are heard on every side, he believes that he is being covered with praise by the whole Hunt.

He also fancies that every woman he meets is in love with him. He is occasionally capable of really heroic actions, and has actually saved desperate situations in French campaigns.

This surprising imbecile, however, plays the desperate fool in times of peace, and his presumption and innate vanity are especially noticeable when he crosses the Channel and lives amongst the English. He goes in for boxing, and, finding himself worsted, bites the ear of his adversary, and afterwards boasts of his deed in a French café, but he makes the mistake of translating the rage of the English onlookers onto ardent praise of his valour.

In fact, the Colonel Gérard is an intolerable ass, a vain coxcomb, a masterpiece of folly. Yet this is the man who, at each step of his life, is entrusted with difficult and perilous missions, which he carried out with an unheard-of sang-froid and heroism, that sort of heroism which faces calmly a frightful death, which must be met alone, and which is stripped of all glory. And the colonel always brings these missions to a successful issue.

"I fear," says the writer in the "Figaro," "that this colonel may have had entrusted to him as an extra mission the task of showing to Englishmen what is the author's idea of a typical French character. And a Frenchman who read the book shuts it with a sense of irritation."

Why?

Well, let us consider. Is this really the truth, and the whole truth, about the French character—this mixture of fool and hero—this empty head, where nothing except the idea of glory can find a resting-place? Have they, the French, really so much presumption, and false-confidence, such utter lack of comprehension?

Now, the champion French bragger—a much more tactful and charming bragger than this Colonel Gérard—was Henry IV. He had some spirit, and there is little doubt that nobody would have made game of him without his knowing it. But then he was a real Frenchman—not made by Conan Doyle.

Again, a coxcomb who had some reason to be such—considerably more reason than this poor Colonel Gérard—was the Maréchal de Richelieu. But he happened to be a cunning diplomat into the bargain.

Unhappily one finds in this Colonel Gérard, whether

placed there intentionally or not, all the faults which strangers are accustomed to impute to the French. Constant allusion is made, for instance, to this "légèreté," which appears to be the national vice of the French, according to the view of Conan Doyle.

Now, in order that "public opinion" should form itself, it is quite sufficient that a small number of people should begin to talk about what they do not know. This colonel, so grotesque and heroic, is none other than the creation of Conan Doyle. He is not a compatriot of the French. He is simply an Englishman's idea of what a Frenchman is. That, of course, in itself, may make this hero somewhat interesting.

This trifling volume, written by a popular English author who has never resided for any length of time in France, and does not even intimately know the language, has been put upon the market to meet a popular demand.

But on the principle that a frightful caricature is better than no portrait at all, the "Figaro" article commends this discussion by one nation of the weaknesses of another. "Let us, however, remember," it adds, "that since those nearest to us, even our own brother, may have zones of thought and character into which we who live beside them day after day can never enter, the difficulties of judging fairly, impartially and thoroughly the inmost characteristics of a nation whose history, read through the clouded mirror of another language, is all that an untravelled writer can see of it—these difficulties are enormous."

Let us grasp the fact that a flying visit to France, however faithfully we may "follow the Man from Cook's," speaking a few words here and there to coachmen, waiters, and guardians of museums, will not permit us to pose as writers capable of plumbing the depths of character of so subtle and elusive a people as the French, whose customs are founded on an ancient history which differs so essentially from our own.

The first thing to throw overboard, when making a study of the people of a different nationality from our own, is our preconceived notion of their general characteristics and our exceedingly vulgar and unlearned general impression of them gathered from the ignorant remarks of our fellow-citizens, the great majority of whom have probably never crossed the Channel in their lives. For instance, to quote a few hackneyed phrases—the French, because they are quick at seizing an argument, and understanding what you say, and a great deal of what you do not say, are accused of—légèreté—whatever that means. A sort of lightness and

shallowness of character, a surface wisdom and so on. The fact is that the typical Frenchman is just as cautious, honest, and reticent as any Englishman. He is thrifty, witty, hard-working, and gay—you may call the result of this combination légèreté if you like.

THE "FUNNY FRENCHMAN."

It was not the funny and the comical Frenchman that is so popular on an English stage who led France through the great crisis of her historical life and brought her safe and sound into the position she now holds, as the First Real Republic in the world—(America, eaten up by trusts, is no longer a free Republican country except by name). One can live for months in Paris and never run across the "funny Frenchman" that is so well known across the footlights of a London stage, or between the covers of a book by Conan Doyle.

A great part of the Entente Cordiale at present hangs upon the acceptation by the British middle classes of the theory that the "funny Frenchman" has got no harm in him, and might just as well be petted as laughed at. There is no real, serious friendship involved in this view.

A HUGE JOKE.

And this explains the fact that the Entente, though it will one day become a great reality, is at present more or less of a huge joke, which it pleases the popular British mind to perpetrate. When the two nations become more firmly united and begin really to understand one another—and there are obstacles on both sides—then will be cemented a friendship which will be of sufficient force to turn the balance in any international dispute and to dictate Peace to the civilised world.

DOME MANNERS.

October 17, 1908.

By the way, I must just write a line on the Dome, without which no Paris book would be complete.

"The Dome" is a café which stands at the intersection of

the Boulevard Montparnasse and the Boulevard Raspail, and for some reason has been made the headquarters of American artists and others.

For some reason the men from our atelier in the Ecole des Beaux-Arts never go up there. Perhaps the café is too far off or too full of "foreigners."

Eberhardt, the sculptor, went up there once, but was so disgusted with the place that he never went again.

Burlingham goes there. Frost, of the "Herald," is not unknown in the Dome. Worst of all, Davidson and his dog are to be found there. And that leads me to speak of Dome manners.

To begin with, you can never get a man to speak of anything but billiards in the Dome. And the curious thing is that these young fellows believe they are playing billiards—on a table without pockets, if you please, and about one-third the size of a real English billiard table.

They are as solemn as anything about their billiards up at the Dome and they pay up like little men for a game.

I would not trouble to play, for I do not play except on a full-sized table with pockets, such as my father possessed in our Hampshire rectory—a county where no good-sized house is without its billiard-room.

Burlingham has often told me that I ought to know more of these men up at the Dome. But I state here with all due respect for them, that they are neither such good artists nor such good players as the Frenchmen in my atelier, and that I have not, moreover, time to make their acquaintance.

As one of them most justly said one night in my hearing (in a flash of lucidity):

"By Gee! there are some American artists come over here to study art—they don't pick up much art, but they learn to play a rattling good game of billiards!"

And the girls you see in there! I was amazed at first. Of all the harem-scarem, loose-robed, just-got-out-of-bed-or-going-to-take-a-bath aspect—well, go and see for yourself.

Clouds of cigarette smoke and plenty of American accent. Oh, Blum, do come away; I can't stick the Dome any longer!

Blum is more sensible than the others, but he must go to the Dome to meet Davidson and his dog.

This Dome is an eccentric excrescence on the face of Paris. Like a boil or a "bouton" on the fair white neck of a beautiful lady.

Jeanne, well—she is a lovely French girl who goes there sometimes.

But do come away, Blum; I can't stand that Dome. Perhaps the most redeeming feature of the Dome is De Kerstrat. He is a tall Frenchman, who walks about with bare feet (encased only in sandals), a fine beard, and a pleasant American accent which he picked up in the States. His name reminds me of some horrible surgical operation, but his nature—ah, there is one of Nature's finest gentlemen!

Come on, Blum; I'm going.

And, by the way (as I see Blum is not likely to budge for ten minutes yet), it was De Kerstrat that went with Burlingham to Switzerland, along the dusty road from Paris, walking all the way, with sandals on their feet. There was something fine about this pilgrimage—the two young men turning their backs on the gay city of Paris and setting their faces towards the snow-white mountains, hundreds of miles away. It was the call of Nature which summoned them out of the Dome Café and along the roads and then ever upwards and Excelsior till the snowy peaks were reached.

They were like blind men groping in the darkness, who feel, though they cannot see it, that there must be light somewhere, and the freshness and silence of Nature, and the grandeur beyond all bocks and billiard-tables.

So they started.

Neither had more than forty francs in his pocket, nor could they tell where the next funds would come from. The future was, for them, embodied in the snow-capped peaks which they had to reach.

From village to village they marched, just like the pilgrims of the olden time, following the call of their inner conscience—or, to go further back, like the Wise Men who followed the Star in the East.

"Which is the way to Switzerland?" is the only question they had to ask on the road.

And when hotel managers stood mutely amazed at the demand, or café garçons dropped whole trays of apéritives and stared aghast at such a question, the two pioneers shook the dust of such and such a village off their feet and went smilingly on.

At last they saw the mountains. And here is a photograph of Burlingham with a stick in his hand pointing out Mount Blanc to his friend.

It was what Burlingham calls "the Wanderlust" that led them so far from the Café Dome, so far from the gay boulevards, into those great snowy silences where the virgin

mountains are shy of the gaze of man and blush suddenly crimson while you look at them.

Here Nature rings the changes down the whole harmonious scale of colours, as though the startling music of a peal of bells took living shape before your eyes and grew incarnate in the luminous lines of glowing mountains.

MISS LOIE FULLER IN PARIS

HER YOUNG "MUSES" DANCE IN OUR CARMELITE CONVENT.

August 23, 1909.

Miss Loie Fuller is, at the moment I write this, staying in Paris, at the Bedford Hotel in the Rue de l'Arcade. She has brought with her a troupe of fifty dancers (her "Muses" she calls them), who rehearse nightly in a large room that looks out on to the winter garden of the hotel, where delighted guests sit and smoke their cigars or fan themselves, listening to the refreshing music of the fountains in the gardens and watching the graceful evolutions of these girl dancers, whom Miss Fuller has for long trained in her own footsteps and who will leave with her for Ontario, Boston, and New York at the end of this month.

Among these girls is Mrs. Hoff, an American lady, whose grace ravishes all who have been fortunate enough to see her dancing. The charm of masses of brown hair and a superb figure is further heightened by eyes of an almost Russian wildness and depth of penetration.

On August 10 I had the pleasure of inviting Miss Loie Fuller and all her party of Muses to visit the Carmelite Convent at No. 25, Rue Denfert Rochereau, where my friend the American sculptor, Mr. R. Eberhardt, lives a life of delicious retirement and unceasing toil in the quiet sanctuary afforded him by this convent, deserted by the Sisters of Mercy some ten years ago. He was a pupil of the great French sculptor Mercier, of whose studio in the Ecole des Beaux Arts he was elected Massier, or head student—a position he held for a year and a half.

Mr. Eberhardt's vast atelier on the ground floor overlooks on one side the quiet, open-air quadrangle where formerly the sisters of this religious order pursued for generations their devotions. In the centre of this quadrangle, and surrounded by a wild luxuriance of tall flowers, a great carved wooden cross, 15 feet high, is erected on a noble

stone pedestal. This cross bears the inscription in French: "La Révérende Mère Marie Hyacinth, Etant Prieure," while on the pedestal one reads a Latin inscription to the effect that the convent was erected in year 1604, underwent first repairs in 1800, and again was repaired in 1856.

This wild garden, haunted only by the butterflies and the thrushes, is surrounded on all four sides by the old grey-gold walls of the convent. When the sisters were in residence this garden was always carpeted by one mass of white flowers—snowdrops in the winter, other blossoms as white in the summer. This exquisite carpet did not outlive their care, and has disappeared with them.

It was to this charming retreat that we came at two o'clock on a glorious August afternoon, and twenty-four girls of Miss Fuller's troupe quickly discarded their summer dresses for the gauzy veils in which they were to perform some of the graceful evolutions and religious dances around the great central cross "en pleine air."

"In this case," Miss Fuller explained, "the dance expresses religious emotion. There are no words. There is simply music and action."

There certainly was! The effect was enchanting; and a photographer, whose services had been requisitioned for the occasion, took half a score of photographs, while the Prince and Princess Troubetzkoy, who accompanied us from their charming residence at the Porte Maillot, where lunch had been served in the garden for all the dancers and other guests, had brought along with them their celebrated Siberian wolves who, tame as cats, posed before the photographer several times.

Prince Paul Troubetzky is a well-known Russian sculptor, and did not lose the opportunity of modelling the head of one of Miss Fuller's younger American dancers—little Karlene Carmen.

Thus was brought to a conclusion an afternoon full of interest, when the silence of the cloisters was for once awakened by the gay laughter of the young girls who tripped between the tall sunflowers in their robe of shining silk.

SOME NOTES WORTH REMEMBERING IN PARIS.

February 18, 1908.

The French, with the exception of the newspaper vendors (who are as smart on a machine as the boys in London) are bad bicycle riders, but good automobile drivers.

The reason is that the bravery of the average Frenchman is not quite of the reckless order—indeed, in a crowded city he is nervous on these slight machines, and will run into you.

On an automobile, however, the driver feels that he has power and weight on his side, and drives with courage, dexterity, judgment, and ability.

Policemen are scoundrels, cruel to horses, but will give you directions if you ask them politely.

Cochers are very stupid.

Post office officials and railway officials are stupid.

On the "Métro" selfishness is the predominant feature.

The prettiest girls are to be seen on the Metropolitan first class during the hours when the theatres empty themselves of their adorable silken-robed contents.

Also in the early morning, from 7 till 8.30 on a fine spring or summer's day, you may notice eight or ten pretty girls in as many minutes walking, frequently bareheaded, to their shops or to the market-places.

Shopkeepers do not want to sell you things at first while you are a stranger, but they will give you credit afterwards, when they know you better. When first you enter their shop they look at you with a glance in which distrust and suspicion are mingled with impatience and disdain. Who is this foreigner, coming to disturb their afternoon siesta, or their chat with an old and friendly customer, about the wickedness of the next-door neighbour? Doubtless he is "Anglichman," who has looked in to ask in which direction is the Opera House, or what hour it is by the clock, or to demand change for a bad five-franc piece.

Once they see your money and learn that you wish to purchase something they soften a little. But many weeks must pass, during which you must visit their shop regularly and make occasional purchases before they will give you anything like a welcome or show you the best goods they possess.

When once they find out that you are not a flying visitor to Paris, but are earning your living amongst them, they will do better by you.

THE PARISIAN CONCIERGE.

Beware of the Concierge of Paris. Even Parisians themselves hold her up in witty illustrated journals and philosophic articles, as a force which must be feared and accounted for.

"You can buy a smile from her for five francs—but it soon fades away," said excellent Barrymore, an American artist who had to do with one of the grimmest of these crocodile-skinned warriors who without wear petticoats and sheep's clothing, but within are ravening wolves, seeking whom they may devour.

Kind English gents, let me warn you to beware of the Concierge—even when she seems to be absent.

Look upon her closed door and you will probably see this legend:

"LA CONCIERGE EST DANS L'ESCALIER."

What do these printed words mean?

They may certainly be taken in their literal translation as meaning that the female Concierge is on the staircase. But they may also mean that she has gone out to do some shopping, or to see a friend (if so grim a person can condescend to possess a "friend"). At any rate, she is not in the Conciergerie.

Her eye may be resting upon you from an upper window.

When at last she comes towards you, she comes with the firm step of a conquering heroine, under whose feet are ruthlessly trampled the dearest wishes of her shivering and terror-stricken locataires—and in whose large relentless hands lie the withered fortunes and the unforwarded letters of those who have left her house and gone forth to seek other lodging.

O, dreadful Concierge, I come, with chattering teeth, to ask you if any registered letters have arrived for me; or if any of my bolder friends have dared to beard you in your den, seeking to see me.

But when the hard glint of your eyes strikes upon me, my heart fails me, and without uttering a word I press a two-franc piece into your greasy palm and slink, ashamed, away.

And that is often the very best thing you can do!

What? You wish that I shall argue with her, cajole, entreat, or damn her with faint blame about a missing letter, because there are no coals in my room, because the chimney smokes?

Poor innocent counsellor, regard the weight of her arm and the solidity of her footwear.

She will not even answer your questions. But she will ask you another—and one that strikes terror into even the stoutest male heart:

"Do you wipe your feet upon the mat, before you go upstairs?"

You walk sorrowfully away, mute and guilty, like the rich man in the Bible who was suddenly ordered to sell all his possessions and give them to the poor.

PARIS PRESS.

February 27, 1908.

There is no Fleet Street in Paris.

The newspapers are all scattered about anywhere; the "Figaro" in the Rue Drouot—its stately and beautiful offices a model for newspaper owners the world over; the "Petit Parisien" in the Rue Lafayette; the "Matin" occupying the corner of the Faubourg Poissonnière and the Boulevard Montmartre; and the "Journal," 100, Rue Richelieu.

The "Daily Mail" hangs out in a modest establishment in the Rue du Sentier, close to the "Matin," and the "New York Herald" boasts a business office in the Avenue de l'Opéra, No. 59, and a printing and editorial office in the Rue du Louvre.

The "Temps," at 5, Boulevard des Italiens, more staid and official, condescends nevertheless to wear upon its lofty forehead, to the amusement of passing boulevardiers, those "Affiches Lumineuses," where the magic hand of electricity writes at night-time extraordinary items of news, mingled with hair advertisements.

The "Echo de Paris" makes its magnificent home on the second floor of one of the finest buildings in the Place de l'Opéra, absolutely adjoining the great Opéra House. Here the very staircase leading to the fine editorial and other offices of this paper is lined with clever political caricatures of those who took a prominent part in the Dreyfus case, and other men of note.

Courtesy to strangers (if these have any pretension to being journalists themselves) is a feature of those who direct and control the French Press. If I ask to see an editor, he not only comes downstairs or invites me upstairs without placing a hundred obstacles between himself and me, as in dear old Fleet Street, but when he arrives he has time to

talk a little, and the "Matin" will even accept a good news story in English, pay you for it, and turn it into French themselves. The "Temps" paid me on a liberal scale for an article of some international importance.

Monsieur Franz Reichel, chief sporting editor of the "Figaro," at one time entertained an article in French from my pen on the "Wellman Polar Expedition." But after full consideration he decided that this expedition was probably a piece of American bluff and that it would not do to go seriously before the French reading public with a detailed description of the proposed expedition. Subsequent events seem to have fully justified his opinion. So I contented myself with having had a glimpse of the most interesting and decorous journalistic office in the world, with its many old-fashioned chiming clocks, its fine carved oak staircases, its collection of historical pictures, its general air of refinement and culture, and, most interesting of all, the dwarf in livery who condescended to take my card in.

As for my article, it was printed in an English paper.

I may add that the Saturday Literary Supplement of the "Figaro" is full of interest to English people, containing, as it almost invariably does, valuable critiques on various phases of English history and on English prose and poetry.

The French illustrated weekly papers, such as "l'Illustration," "La Vie Au Grand Air," "Le Monde Illustre," "La Vie Parisienne," and "Le Rire," are magnificently produced, and often contain articles scintillating with wit and gaiety.

Strangers arriving in Paris—those at least who have any elementary knowledge of French—quickly pick up an acquaintance with the French Press, and they do wisely in devoting a little of their time thus, for a nation's virtues and foibles can be gauged as much by studying its journals and its literature as by visiting its museums and places of entertainment. Especially is this so with regard to France. The springs of the French Press are actuated by forces utterly unknown in England. The anti-Dreyfusards, with the Clergy and the Army behind them, have a whole regiment of papers which express their views and fight for their opinions. The Freemasons and the Freethinkers have their organs. The Jews find a champion in a journal whose editor is a Jew, and a very capable editor into the bargain. But, apart from religion and politics, the French Press is certainly inspired by high ideals. Many of its daily articles are written with as much care as would be devoted in Eng-

land to articles written for the less ephemeral publication afforded by magazines such as the "Pall Mall" or the "Cornhill." We find in "Le Journal," day after day, stories by members of the Académie, stories which are perfectly elaborated and which bear that sort of finish which it is very rare to discover in English daily papers, which generally confine themselves to giving us plain facts. One has not long kept in touch with the French Press before one gets accustomed to a thrill of joyful expectancy in opening one's favourite French paper; and in reading these witty and daring articles we may be sure of a good laugh or a satisfactory shudder.

The scope of these notes does not allow me to make more than a passing mention of the deadly and interminable warfare waged between those two daily papers, the "Matin" and the "Journal," as the roots of this conflict penetrate profoundly into questions of Governmental policy and national and personal integrity which could not even be summarised within the limits of this chapter. The mere delineation of the bases of this conflict would confront us with a score of still smouldering scandals, such as the alleged blackmailing of Leopold II., the action of the "Matin" in the Humbert affair, in the Rémy affaire, in the confiscation of the Chartreuse, and in the remarkable "Liquidation des Congregations."

The better-class French dailies at one sou are run on a higher grade, with more attention to grammar and style, than are the English halfpenny papers.

I have Monsieur Camille Mauclair's kind permission to give herewith my translation of one of his admirable short stories, which appeared in the columns of "Le Journal" some time ago. It is a fine example of French style, and one would have to search a long time in the columns of a halfpenny London paper before finding therein a prose poem of this delicate quality:

LES TROIS CHEMINS.

(THE THREE ROADS.)

March 11, 1908.

In the country of Zaandam, in the Province of Frise, Holland, it is sweet to live, and the hearts of the inhabitants are simple as in the ancient times.

In the country of Zaandam there are no isolated roads,

for there are always three which wind along their way together.

The first is the Green road, all glittering with fresh and lusty grass, spangled with flowers. This road is bordered with the fields of rye and the rich pastures.

And yet, almost alongside of this road, stretches another which is quite black, and covered with velvet-like coal-dust. The hoofs of the drag-horses have cut their marks deep therein. And, alongside of this black and the other green road, there stretches still a third road, which is blue. Over this road no feet can pass, and yet it is the most beautiful of all, for it is made of a wide ribbon of transparent water, wherein lies a perfect reflection of the heavens. If we wish to know what is going on in the skies above we need not even lift our heads; it is only necessary to gaze into the water. There one finds mirrored the exact form of the smallest cloud, and we can count therein the passing swallows and the kingfishers.

And evermore wind thus, and parallel, the three roads—black, green, blue—describing fine curves across the soft landscapes of Zaandam, and these roads seem to have no end. They lead, however, to the sea!

At first the sea is invisible, for all the neighbourhood is flat. One can only suspect the presence of the ocean by the salt taste which the wind, coming over the waves, leaves sometimes on the lips. We know that we are on the outskirts of the province, and we walk so far that there we find the sea before us, when we least thought of it.

On these three roads come and go men and women who lead each of them different lives according to the road they pass over. Those of the green road are the peasants who plough and who lead their cattle to pasture. At night they return into the farms and the windmills which are strewn all along this green road, and since they are clothed in lively-coloured costumes of a strange peculiar cut, they have the appearance of very old-fashioned dolls, who are going home into their great toy-boxes. The men and women of the black highway are black like this road itself, and the sweat which pours from their foreheads is mixed with black dust. They lead huge and heavy carts which have been laden in the mines and the contents of which they are going to discharge into the holds of steamers.

Those people who belong to the blue canal pass slowly on their painted barges, leaning on their long poles. At the doors—bordered with geraniums—of the little cabins which are erected on the false bridge of the long barges, fair,

plump women give the breast to rosy babes, and one sees laughing heads appear in the hatchways.

Thus go by the people of Zéland, in three classes. The fourth we do not know anything of, because the fourth class are away on the sea, whence they send home the fish for the others.

Maria Denaalde, at the window of the great mill which belonged to her father, watched, passing each on his way, and all equally busy, the wayfarers of the three roads. She dominated them all, like a little queen, from the height of her balcony. Also, all those who passed by, looked up at her. For she was pretty and adorned with beautiful raiment at the same time. With her golden curls and white petticoats she carried her name well, for "Denaalde" means, in Flemish, "the needle," and in truth she was fine and slender and shining, with a smile and a glance which pierced. The mill stood there by the side of the water, and its huge wings made signals to all the country round, as if by these gesticulations it would scatter invitations to all to come and see something extraordinary. And when one came, one saw this little Maria, clad in her jewels, and she made lace, while below her the creaking mill made bread.

By all accounts she was destined to marry one day the son of a farmer. Denaalde, her father, wished it, but of this Maria as yet knew nothing. She possessed wide meadows which were filled with sheep, and when she passed along the green road she could walk far without reaching the end of the dark walls of her rye-fields.

All this promised happiness, such as one understands happiness in the country of Zaandam, and the youth who should marry her was robust and good-tempered, and the children would be handsome. Maria found him pleasant to look at and was happy to meet him. But whenever they parted company she thought no more of him.

Now there was a man who always half stopped to look at her when he passed down the black road. He led a train of waggons laden with mineral ore, great, glittering fragments —and he had eyes as brilliant and as dark. He directed his drivers, and although he was covered with dust and dirt this was a rich man, for the gangs of men and teams of vigorous horses all belonged to him.

Maria followed him with eyes of surprise, and wonderingly asked herself whether he lived under the earth. And the glance of this dark giant had in it something demoniacal, yet submissive, which inspired in her heart simultaneously fear and affection.

Then on the blue road there went and came a red boat,

painted with red-lead, with green rigging and a great triangular sail, which the daylight rendered blinding. On this vast sail fell the fretwork shadow of the arms of the mill, like pieces of embroidery. And all around the boat the glossy waters folded and unfolded themselves, full of azure reflections, and the slate-coloured kingfishers sported and shrieked. At the rudder stood a young and sunburnt man, with golden cheeks, and his breast was white in the hollow of his blouse. His locks were curly, his head was small and set with an independent air. His mouth was small and a little sarcastic. Maria watched him from the moment when his boat came into view on the bend of the canal until the moment when it disappeared behind the next bend.

And this young sailor never looked at her.

Now, one evening the old Denaalde remarked to his daughter:

"You will soon have to get married, my little girl, and you will wed Dirk, the son of our neighbour, for he has a little fortune, is good-looking, and he loves you."

Maria cried out immediately:

"I don't want him."

And she went away in a huff and hid in her room, where she wept. Then she reflected that she had answered thus without having given sufficient consideration to the matter, and she could not guess how it was that this refusal had flown spontaneously from her lips with such instinctive violence. As her father adored her, he did not torment her about it.

The next day she heard her father speaking with Dirk on the wooden gallery which surrounds the mill at its base, and whence one can see, through the scuttles, the machinery of the mill. At this moment there passed, on the black road, the man with the teams, and he stopped to gaze at her so ardently that she felt fascinated. Then Dirk went out of the enclosure with a downcast look. He saw the other man. He saw Maria at the window. And, watching from behind her window, Maria understood that between these two men immortal hate was born. For the man of the black road thought he saw the fiancé of the girl whom he desired, and the other thought he had discovered the lover of Maria and the reason of her refusal to wed.

The day thus passed. Maria was haunted by the eyes of the master of the team of waggons. What road should she follow when the time came for her to descend from her round tower and take part in the life of the country of Zaandam?

She knew very well that the green road would find no

attraction for her, as she found that road wearisome. She would not be a farmer's wife and she would not love the honest Dirk.

The black road frightened her, at the same time that it fascinated her. The man who coveted her would lead her into the black palaces which are under the earth, then towards the great iron ships which smoke and bellow down there beyond the flat country, in the spacious ports of old Holland. And, in the black hands of this giant, she would be like a precious little doll made of gold and lace, of flowery silks and filigree. . . . And perhaps she would go very far, far away. Then Maria realised that she was not one of those little girls who are very afraid of going far away; but, on the contrary, she was greatly tempted by the prospect. And all of a sudden she thought with spite of the young sailor in the red boat, who never looked her way.

He appeared that evening in the twilight. As usual, he leant on the long handle of the rudder, and the setting sun, red in a sky of periwinkle blue, bathed in colour the great sail and the bold and mocking face. Then Maria, watching, watching, watching, felt a sudden pressure at her heart. For all of a sudden the boatman signed to her, once—twice. Unconsciously she inclined her head and sent a kiss to him.

That night Maria could not sleep. At dawn there was a disturbance on the green road—a rumour of stifled, furious voices, a quarrel, the sound of dull shocks, a cry, then the noise of a gathering of people. Folks exclaimed and raised excited cries. The voice of the old miller dominated the tumult. . . .

The door of the enclosure was opened, and Dirk, wounded, was carried out, whilst the young men of the neighbourhood led the man of the black road to the village near by. Both had been watching under the window of Maria and had fought savagely. But the team-driver had drawn his knife.

Now, when father Denaalde made up his mind to summon Maria, thinking that she would be touched by the sight of the young farmer who had been wounded on her account, and that he would put her hand into the hand of the young man, he could not find her anywhere. She had made her choice and fled away. And, by the time that the sun was high in the heavens, Maria de Zaandam was on board the red boat which went down towards the sea. She laughed in the arms of the sailor who had fixed her choice by a single sign, because he had for long pretended to think nothing of her.

Little she cared whether she would be cursed, whether she

would be happy, whether she would be deserted or abandoned, whether she would come back as a beggar, or to die. The eternal instinct of her race, in the veins of which ran sailors' blood, led her towards Amsterdam, towards the north, towards the fog, towards the mists—and whilst one bled on the green road and another wept on the black road, Maria with her friend went joyously away on the road that is always blue.

LONDON PUBS' AND PARIS CAFES.

Parslow and I were discussing the relative drunkenness of London pubs' and Paris cafés, when we came mutually to the conclusion that there were practically no "drunks" (in the plural sense) in the cafés of Paris, while it was a singular thing that drunks abounded in the London pub', and that any Saturday night the dark alleys of Whitechapel might be heard ringing with the raucous cries of beer and rum-laden gentry, while respectable people hurrying by mutter to themselves, "Hark at Barclay and Perkins!"

Barclay and Perkins should scarcely be called upon to bear all the blame for this drunken uproar, as it is a question of how that firm's wares are presented to the public.

It generally happens that the glasses are set on the counter of a little, noisy, crowded, stand-up bar, from which the party of drinkers must hastily retreat, unless they pay their way by constantly chucking down their throats a fresh glass of something.

Now exactly the contrary is the rule in a Paris café. In the summer, and even in the early spring and late autumn, the windows of the large and prettily appointed café are wide open upon the smiling boulevards; there is no dark, filthy, shamefaced aspect about the interior, where so many comfortably installed guests sit sipping their apéretif, or their café, not dreaming of taking more than one, or at most two glasses the whole evening long; and under no sense of compulsion whatever, so far as the management are concerned, to drink more than one glass. Many of them, indeed, with a little red tapis on the table in front of them, are playing cards in parties of four, or writing letters by themselves, or absorbed in animated and friendly conversation.

They have only to turn their heads towards the wide and spacious windows in order to find plenty of amusement in watching those who are seated under the coloured awnings of the café drinking their glass on the "terrasse," while the

crowd on the broad sidewalk ("trottoir") saunter by beyond.

Look on this picture and on that.

I don't suppose anybody knows a public house in Fleet Street where the private bar conversation ever rises much higher than the "'ave another?" level; whereas, to take one out of a dozen typical cafés in Paris, the yet unpublished European news of the day may generally be heard floating about in the Café Napolitain at the hour of the apératif. It is rather a rendezvous of journalists and men of intelligence in the professions than a soaking place for beer-bibbers.

When I say that Gordon Smith may there be found most evenings keeping the "Chasseur" in constant requisition, I think the average reader will agree that I have said sufficient to prove my case.

FOOD.

March 14, 1910.

There is an idea abroad in England that the French cuisine is "épatant"—something wonderful—startling. Well, so it is. But the startle is on the wrong side; for the French do not eat so well as we do, and many a meal for which they gratefully and contentedly pay would be thrown back in the face of the waiter of any good, middle-class English restaurant, as an insult and a fraud, while the client who was so served would march from the restaurant, le front haut, without paying for the inferior food which had been placed before him.

The British workman would certainly not accept the food which is daily and hourly eaten and paid for by the French bourgeoise class—including bank clerks, shop assistants, small rentiers and other middle-class people of independent means. The British workman would reject this food—these insignificant little square-cut pieces of tough rosbif—as being an unmanly solution of the problem of eating. He expects, and he gets, a fine cut from the joint—i.e., two or three slabs of excellent thin-cut roast beef with fat to it, two vegetables, and a half-and-half in a tankard, and this lot does not cost him as much as I pay in Chartier's popular restaurants in Paris—noisy, crowded, table-clothless, devil-may-care, wholesale feeding establishments, where I am "served" with an indigestible piece of so-called rosbif, which is generally of a greyish colour, and has no vegetables with it at all—I don't want to mention five or six little "pommes frites" not worth the name!

The "Shilling Ordinary," which you can obtain in the fine back dining-room of any good-sized pub' in London is, in comparison with a French Fr. 1.25 lunch, something so generous in quantity and excellent in quality that no Frenchman, even of the upper classes, would believe his eyes if he were served in Paris with such a lunch at such a price. I can get such a meal in Paris, it is true; but I must go to Fox's in the Rue d'Amsterdam for it, and pay at least four francs.

During one of my recent flying trips to England I lunched on such a "Special Ordinary" in a London pub', and was served with a fine ox-tail soup, a large plate of roast beef cut in fine slices, with horse-radish and two vegetables (enormous, grandfather-like mealy potatoes and cabbage to match), and a huge portion of juicy rhubarb tart, with pie-crust which was a sight to make sore eyes dance. One shilling to pay, and tuppence extra for the tankard.

The fact is that the average Frenchman does not know what good food is. Even if he dines regularly in Duval's he is content with the microscopic piece of rosbif or gigot bretonne about the size of two squares of a chessboard, or a little tiny piece of luke-warm fowl—provided he can wash it down with plenty of wine.

The Frenchman seems to take wine more as a food than as drink. I suppose he feels instinctively that there is "something lacking" in his diet, so he warms his heart with plenty of Bordeaux and considers he has had a good dinner.*

Of course, such a Frenchman, if money is of no account, may and often does arrive at eating a sufficient meal by constantly ordering plate after plate of different fish, meats, and tiny sweets till he is no longer hungry. It is an expensive process, and I prefer to keep the bill down and curse the waiter.

Those beautiful roots, the luscious white artichoke, as we know them in England, graciously served upon toast and covered with white sauce, are almost, if not quite, unknown in France. During five years of French restaurant feeding I have not once found them on the carte. No doubt they are obtainable at the Café d'Anglais, where millionaires like Bennett go to drink a glass of water and eat a poached egg, leaving twenty francs for the waiter. But I am not speaking

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* I have seen a cradled French baby given white wine to drink. It swallowed this just as though it were emptying a milk-bottle. Many an English youth of sixteen would have walked unsteadily after such a dose.

of such restaurants. I speak of the bourgeois restaurants, where men who live and work hard in Paris—artists, mécaniciens, and stenographers—must go daily to feed. I was shocked when, on asking for an artichoke shortly after my arrival in France, I received a sort of child's playball—a circular collection of olive-green, prickly-pointed leaves folded one above the other, with a soft sponge-like heart of tasteless fungus in the centre. I saw French people tearing these leaves off one by one and sucking them with enthusiasm, till they arrived at the spongy heart, which they devoured with considerable relish. This they call an artichoke.

Lemon is never served with pancakes in any popular Paris restaurant. You must ask the garçon for the lemon separately. Three French ladies at my table watched me with great curiosity as I sprinkled my pancake with lemon-juice. One even confidentially remarked to her friend that this was probably an improvement to Crêpes Normandes, and that she was going one day to try it herself.

Haddock, as the Englishman knows it, never arrives on the table of a popular restaurant in Paris in recognisable form. It shrinks to such infinitesimal proportions that it is not worth half the price that is charged for it. To add insult to injury it is often marked on the menu as pretending to be cooked "à l'Anglaise." The great firm, crisp flakes that we know are, alas, not there. The real original haddock, no doubt, is somewhere in hiding, and could be tracked to his lair in the kitchen behind us, but he is so transformed in the cooking that his best qualities are conspicuous by their absence.

. . . . . .

One day, perhaps, the French bourgeois may find out how we eat in England and at what price. He will then rise up in open rebellion against those who cater for him at present and will demand value for his money. But perhaps before that time the restaurants, like the execrable French matches and tobacco, will have become a Government monopoly and the poor citizens of the Republic will be powerless. How they envy our matches and our tobacco when they do see them! But then England is comparatively free from the excess of commercial corruption which obtains at present in France.

April 3, 1910.

This is perhaps not the place to mention at any length the extraordinary tariff system now obtaining in France with regard to the importation of English goods—especially tobacco, boots and shoes, and leather bags.

Under the new tariff, real leather kit-bags (in which I take a special interest, having recently bought one in the Avenue de l'Opéra for Frs. 75) pay duty at Frs. 3 per kilo.

When we come to a tariff of Frs. 3.00 per pair of leather boots with sewn soles, and Frs. 5.00 per pair of leather top-boots imported from England into France (with which latter country we pretend to be on friendly terms) we recognise that the "entente cordiale" is somewhat of an ironic term—and that the French are determined to cut their own throats. For while we must pay exorbitant prices for ordinary good English and American boots on the boulevards here in Paris, the French must raise the price of their own boots enormously under this tariff on leather, as a great deal of their raw leather is imported from England and other countries.

With regard to tobacco, the average Frenchman has a fixed idea that the taste of the Englishman as concerns this weed is not so refined as their own, and that the Englishman is accustomed to smoke tobacco which more or less resembles straw, and that there is no tobacco so fine in the world as the rubbish which the Frenchman buys for a few sous in the little toy tabacs scattered about the boulevards. I can only congratulate the French Government upon the facility with which they succeed in foisting this vile tobacco upon their citizens; but no Englishman would insult a respectable pipe by filling it with this coarse, wiry, hot mixture, which always makes me feel that I am smoking a pipe full of thorns.

They call this disagreeable tobacco "Scaferlati Ordinaire," but by any other name it would smell as bad. The packet containing 40 grammes costs fivepence.

It is rather amusing to see that umbrella frames, the handles of which happen to be nickelled, coppered, or oxidised, have to pay duty under the head of "false jewellery." This works out at Frs. 150 per 100 kilogrammes imported. In the course of a tariff discussion in the Chamber of Deputies, Monsieur le Deputé Deloncle drew attention to the extraordinary classification of umbrella parts and fittings as "false jewellery"—but added that "this had no importance

except to foreigners." (See British Chamber of Commerce "Monthly Circular," No. 134, January, 1910.)

The duty on linoleum exported from England into France is very heavy, viz., Frs. 25.00 per 100 kilos, which represents an average of 30 per cent. of the real value of the article itself! The new proposed rate of Frs. 30 per 100 kilos would represent 36 per cent. of the value of the article. The British Chamber of Commerce in Paris drew up a special report to point out the iniquity of this heavy prohibitive tax on linoleum, which, after all, is not such a wicked article as, shall we say, opium. It has, indeed, cleanly and hygienic properties which should recommend it to our friends the French. Indeed, as the British Chamber of Commerce somewhat aptly remark at the end of their report on this subject, the only countries where the duties on linoleum coming from England are absolutely prohibitive, being heavier than those exacted by the French, are Roumania, Russia, Austria, and Italy—"countries moreover where the habits of the working-classes have never yet been cited as models from the point of view of hygiene and comfort!"

We can see Italy holding up her pretty hands in horror at the bare idea of the importation across her frontiers of anything so clean and therefore anti-æsthetic as oil-cloth.

NEWFIELD'S PHILOSOPHY.

June 6, 1909.

Newfield lives in Paris, and is a useful man to know. If you have a concession for a new railway and no money to build it with, he will find you the funds.

But not only is Newfield, like many other Germans, a commercial genius. He has gifts of discrimination which run in other directions, as the following study will show:

Leaning his chin on his upraised hands, Newfield expounded the following principles in his office, Rue d'Alger:

In love—how shall I explain it in English—you must first of all give the girl the idea that you are inevitably right: that you can make no mistakes: that you are absolutely sure of yourself: that your self-confidence is utterly justified.

Secondly, you must treat the woman always as though you knew quite well that she was anxious and desirous to break down the maidenly reserve which she pretends should exist as a barrier between you.

Thirdly, you must never compromise yourself. It must be the woman who blushes when you meet—you only smile.

In a good woman, the beginning of love arises from two springs—Pity and Vanity. This Pity, however, is a very delicate and dangerous thing. When you first impress her with the idea that she ought to have Pity, she should break into floods of tears, or the game is lost.

As to the Vanity, that arises in her by the mere fact that she sees you love her, and this vanity may have birth in her before you have ever said you love her. She knows you admire her.

These last two points on Pity and Vanity do not apply to Cocottes, who are not women. It is unwise to have anything to do with Cocottes, as the expenses of these latter are so enormous that they cannot love for nothing.

In each woman you search for her weak point and gain your way on that.

Never appear to be in a hurry with her.

She is like a horse, and must be held by the head and controlled. She has less understanding or refinement of thought than is generally imagined.

If you succeed in getting her into a white heat of passion, you take advantage of that moment, and you then drive her crazy by the way in which you manage her.

If a woman after the first surrender to you does not come back of her own will the second time, but has to be asked, it shows that you do not know your business.

"JACK."

A POEM.

Written in the Cuisine Bourgeoise, to commemorate Miss Fox, of ever-glorious memory in the St. Martin's Art School. Her pet name in the studios was "Jack."

"JACK."

Come back! Come back! Like Thunder on the Stairs
The feet of those too late are echoing—
Tantalus stretched in ceaseless agony
Was not more weary of his unsuccess,
More constant in his vain endeavour, than I.

Come back, Eternal Past that lives in Thought
As Memory; contrasting with this day—

So wan, so cold—that men call "That Which Is"—
So wan, so cold, compared with "That Which Was."

A hundred steps there were—cold steps of Stone
That led to Paradise—I trod them all
With beating heart—with heart that beat the more
As I ascended, for I knew that She
Was posing in the old Atelier,
Smiling 'mid scores of students, with her head
Bird-like in exquisite pose—a darling head
Upon a body wholly beautiful—
Uplifted prouder than the proud swan's head
Sways o'er the glooming waters—oh heavenly Jack!
Come back and pose once more, come back, come back!

. . . . . .

October 29, 1909.

What influence is this that comes from so far away, making all the riot of Paris withdraw into its ugly shell and leaving, clear as summer skies at evening time, the quiet mind filled with sad reflections and the ear with haunting melodies like vesper bells?

Leave me a little alone with this great Sorrow, which has power to purify. Even religious sentiment, so outcast, so banished and exiled from France, finds herein its part, striving mutely with Remorse, as those strive who are moved by affection rather than by wrath.

Jack will be harshly criticised by many and some (especially women) will blame her, and others judge her. I can do neither, for I only sit here to register a strange fact, and record an influence as mysterious as wireless telegraphy.

Indeed, it is as though a far-off finger touched me, and showed me all that was wrong in my life. And in a moment all the tinsel glory of the painted boulevards is crumpled up and rolled away.

Other scenes silently supplant those to which I am accustomed. The panorama of my view of life changes, without more noise and as inexplicably as scenes may change in dreams, where the landscape unrolls in castles and abysses, towers whence clang the wild peals of bells, gulfs and gorges where the forked tongues of the ocean foam.

I question none of these changes (which Jack's influence makes upon my life) any more than a man in a dream questions the reality of the views he sees.

Where before I saw no harm, now is a mocking figure set, which points with scorn at what I thought was only foolish.

And on the heights of danger where I loved to roam, I see flapping in the wind the black Flag of Death.

All this heretic crowd who come rushing and roaring down the broad, paper-strewed boulevards are swept away out of the province of my thought in a moment. They cannot know anything of St. Martin's Art School in London, nor can they count the number of stone steps that led up there; nor understand the feeling of warmth and security with which one entered the studios when She posed. Nor have these stupid foreigners ever stood, trembling with solemn joy, half-way down the stairs listening for the rustle of her skirts.

If they knew her—"Who is it?" they would say, "a model—well, like all models, I suppose."

Ah, it is good, all these miles away, to scent once more the sober breath of England and hear the high ideals preached above the waters of cesspools and listen to bells ringing and chiming from church towers, and voices singing in the solemn cloisters.

EN PLEIN AIR.

April 18, 1910.

It may not be uninteresting to note one or two experiences of the dulcet and pastoral order, encountered whilst painting in the Luxembourg Gardens last autumn. Having satisfied a gigantic if somewhat gruff official that I was furnished with the necessary official permit to paint emanating from the Senate, I was left alone with the birds, who used to take their bath very leisurely about 8 a.m. in the waters that flowed, with the folding evolutions of a practised skirt-dancer, from step to step over the Fontaine de Medicis. These birds behaved like gentlemen in Government employ, who stroll down to the office at ten o'clock in the morning. They were never in a hurry. The musical cadence of the falling waters was accompanied by the high-pitched obligato of their ablutionary splashings, as, standing on tiptoe in two centimetres of flowing water (within reach of the hand of the beautiful recumbent statue above them) they clapped their tiny wings, sending a silver shower of spray flashing up against the shafts of sunlight that poured down through the foliage of the elm-trees so early

in the morning. These fluffy little balls of animated song, the common sparrows of the Luxembourg, were certainly not much awed by the gigantic figure of Cyclops, who bends over the happy lovers below.

Here, also, once one had fixed one's easel, came the delightful and enthusiastic French painter, Monsieur Pierson, carrying his half-finished canvas in his hand. A retired French officer, he devotes his whole time to painting, revelling in the liberty which he at last enjoys after so many years of duty. Already his pictures are to be met with in the different salons.

Here we worked together, in the buzzing silence of the gardens. The insects hummed and the sparrows twittered as we exchanged an occasional remark and squeezed our tubes of Vert Emeraude and Laque Géranium on our respective palettes.

Our agreeable labours were only occasionally disturbed by the advent of the children of the Luxembourg Gardens, who, feeling strong within them the elementary instinct of criticism, used to whisper to one another with great zest:

"We shall decide which is the best of the two paintings of the Fontaine. Let us criticise!"

And these serious little self-elected critics probably did as well in their way as the "critiques accrédités" of the halfpenny Press.

So, amid bees, birds, and flowers there grew upon the canvas the great, ancient, ivy-covered wall, the Giant leaning over the murmuring waters, and the two young lovers sheltered beneath the huge rock.

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(Composed near the Fontaine de Medicis. Jardins de Luxembourg.)

How I love it—falling water,
With its soft harmonious laughter
And the echo following after—
All the stream was moving slowly,
In their cups the lilies caught her;
And the rushes bowed them lowly,
How I love it—falling water.

Doubtless far back in the ages
My ancestors were brave sailors—
Fought with storm and followed after
Roaring waves whose crests were foaming;
In frail boats for ever roaming—

How I love it—falling water,
O'er dry deserts I have sought her.
All the stream was moving slowly.
And the rushes bowed them lowly.

AUDITION CHEZ MASSENET.

DIARY—JUNE 16, 1911.

This is a red-letter day, as we say in England. For to-day it was my agreeable duty to take Mrs. X. to the house of Monsieur Massenet, le grand compositeur de la Rue de Vaugirard. Nous y sommes allé en auto-taxi depuis la Rue Ribéria, Passy. Comme c'était long. Enfin arrive, quelle chance! Le grand maitre était chez lui. Our rendezvous was for half-past two, and the clock was striking the half-hour as we mounted his staircase.

I shall never forget this memorable afternoon. I had no idea that the art of music, when one goes to the root of it with such an expert artist as he, could contain so much that was férique, ennobling, elevating.

My conscience smites me even now to think that I, an artist in a humble way, could have ever descended from these high ideals which he holds; or searched for pleasure otherwise than in the pursuit of art.

And then again, all that is beautiful and lovely—lovable—is bound up inextricably in that very work which he has pursued with such tremendous success during the whole of his life-time. The very nature of music is voluptuous.

He was at once master and lover.

When he took his seat before the instrument—a large piano standing against the wall in a plain, decorous room—it was to teach and explain—and listen. Mrs. X. took off her hat and began to sing with very graceful movements of the hands and body. The whole room soon rang and thrilled with the rich tones of her powerful voice. Then he would interrupt her with a word of advice. He asked her if she could not insert something called, I believe, an arrêt into one passage. She said, "No! I can't do that."

Then presently, to my astonishment, accompanying himself, he began to sing a passage which she had just finished. What a revelation! The pathos—the meaning, the intention poured into each note, without perceptible effort, a pulsation of spontaneous and genuine though delicate pathos. As a great writer choses just the very word which is proper in

a certain phrase—the inevitable, the unique, and only word which will express his meaning—so he chose the inevitable tone which should express and reveal a given emotion. It seemed as though the sentiment concealed within the music was unfolding itself as naturally as though a flower should unfold beneath the heat of a midday sun. "Put," he said, "a little more esprit into that passage—some esprit de gamin!"

The author of the opera "Thais" was endeavoring to impart to his enraptured worshipper the spirit of the music. She covered him with really pretty broken fragments of thanks such as, "O Monsieur Massenet, vous êtes un ange!"

And now it comes back to my memory how he rose and sang the pleading tremination to one passage of his opera, approaching nearer to her, and bowing with his head over her shoulder on the last note. And in an instant he showed her the difference between the regular, formal, monotone of the mauvaises exécutrices—and that gush of almost uncontrollable yet delicately restrained pathos, which made a poem at once of what was before almost prose.

"You have sentiment sometimes," he said to her, "but you must have it always!"

Then he told her that the majority of exécutants do not follow what he has written. Illustrating a certain passage with great tenderness, he ceased, and Mrs. X. exclaimed, "Oh! like that?" "Mais—c'est écrit!" replied the master, pointing to the annotations on the printed score. "The accompanists change what I have written. It is spoilt and made flat and uninteresting!" (just as publishers of literature take off the sharp edge of a fine piece of writing—which is not to their taste, or which they fear will offend those in high places, or ruffle the prejudices of the precious public. The true artist knows no fear.)

"The other day," said the great Massenet, "Madame Melba came here to sing over some passages of my music. I told her, 'Mais vous chantez ça comme si vous étiez payé vingt francs le soir.' She went away, followed by instructions, and trained herself on those special points to which I had called her attention, putting some proper sentiment into her delivery of the words. When she came back and sang those passages again I said to her, 'Maintenant vous chanetz comme si vous gagniez vingt mille francs par soir!'"

His handling of the piano was, of course, masterful—the piano had no chance when this old man and great musician sought to bring the heart out of his music. It became, as people are fond of saying—merely an instrument in his hands.

At one moment he terminated at great speed a magnificent passage which Mrs. X. was singing, in order the better to enforce upon her memory and imagination the importance of the greatly increased tempo—where the passion of a love song was on the point of reaching its tremendous, yet pathetic climax—he smote with all his force upon the keys, accompanying this wonderful energy with a simultaneous stamp of the feet which left Mrs. X. far behind. She had no chance to sing with a drag. He had brought the passage to a glorious and triumphant finish before she had recovered from the shock of finding that her previous masters had entirely misinstructed her as to the intention of Massenet, in so far as the writing of the score of this passage was concerned. Further than that, he adroitly proved to her, by practical methods and arguments, that such tempo was the only possible solution of the passage in question, whose spring and vigour resulted from the feeling of desperation which hovered behind the words.

ST. MALO.

(Published in "The American Register," Paris, Sunday, September 16, 1906.)

Although the autumn is here, Parisians know of at least one seaside place where they can spin out their summer holidays till the end of September, and this season St. Malo on the Côtte d'Emeraude has drawn many happy mortals from the tangle of those distractions which belong inevitably to a great city, and has led them into a wild seaweed-strewn wilderness where the sun and the sea are triumphant over all.

Let us follow them. One starts from the Gare Saint-Lazare. Here is Versailles. Only a moment's pause and, the long train lifting itself upon wings of strength, we are purring softly between meadows of luxuriant corn, through sun-streaked if miniature forests, and out into the vast plain. We reach Le Mans. Then more long, broad, tangled hedges, skirting fields of golden corn. Here is Rennes, built entirely in stone, a marvellously model city, the houses, tall, white, and clean, all looking exactly alike, yet conveying no impression of monotony. The great fire of 1720 burnt out all the wooden houses but left the cathedral standing. We visit this. It is now growing late. The swallows are screaming round the wide stone-paved market-place. This square

is almost deserted. A heavenly sky presages the swift decline of day, and the peaceful air of heaven is woven with the wild songs of the birds.

One shudders to think that it was in this godly, righteous, and sober-looking town that Dreyfus passed through his Gethsemane.

But it is time to proceed on our journey. We quickly reach St. Malo. Once inside the ramparts, one tastes with delight that sense of being sheltered in a species of human eagle's nest built on a rock overhanging the emerald sea. Here are old houses bearing dates such as 1600, difficult to decipher, but, when recognised, filling one with a spirit of veneration for this venerable city. Here is a gigantic and almost Roman-looking wall, plastered with little gables, beneath which peep out latticed windows, half revealing and half concealing cool and lofty chambers, which overlook the sea. Here one is shut in between the rock-like sides of a tortuous street, where neighbours may shake hands across the roadway beneath. Here a flash of sea greets the eye between two houses, and over the grey ramparts lies the everlasting emerald of the ocean, strewn with golden islands.

Soon it becomes dark. Then the little city sleeps, the wide, whispering sea making fringes of foam around it, and the starlight lies on the foam.

One looks to hear the cry of the old corsairs, who put out to sea to track and destroy the heavily-laden English merchantmen homeward bound from the East Indies. For this was a city of right gallant pirates not three hundred years ago; and here we are beneath a monument erected to one of them. He stands pointing out to sea, one hand shading his weather-beaten forehead. He seems to see beyond the rocks, through all the blinding storms of winter, where the precious frigate, gold-laden, tosses, an easy prey, on the dangerous reefs.

But here is the Hotel de l'Union, close to the fish-market, which will be full of buzzing fun to-morrow morning, and where many a brave lobster and many a hairy sea-spider comes to his end, amid the sound of bartering. There is room in this hotel. All are smiling and affable. On retiring, we soon fall asleep.

We are awakened next morning by the sweet and plaintive note of an unseen bird, which may have been a jackdaw upon a wall, and which as though drunk with the sound of its voice, repeats again and again its morning call, lazily, yet untiringly, in extreme satisfaction, a note that contains the quintessence of gratitude and calm joy.

Listening to this unseen bird which sings on the walls below, outside there in the waking city, one says to oneself: "What folly to rise! How could one destroy this exquisite sensation of novelty, this delicate apprehension of the beauty of the morning, this anticipation of the joy of unwonted scenes, this waking in an old, enchanted city which is a fortress, built alike to defend itself from the sea and from its enemies? But the sea is in part its friend. For the sea and the rocks make the little city, so daintily defiant, difficult of access. This is a city built in heaven and let down with ropes to rest upon the common earth to enchant all men."

We do eventually get up and, after coffee and rolls, step outside to find ourselves in the midst of the agreeable fuss of the fish-market, with the good dames in their ancient garb, the picturesque costume of Brittany, the trimmings of spotless white lace over their abundant hair, and the little black cap set far back on the head, and the clean-looking blue petticoat, the same colour and material as the workman's blouse. Here is all sorts of bargaining and a fine, healthy smell of the sea. We step up on to the ramparts. A flight of little steps leads to the summit. A dazzling prospect lies before us. The sea is of a Mediterranean blue. Near by, the island called the "Grand Bé" rises like a coloured gem from the deep emerald and purples of the ocean. As far as the eye can reach the turquoises, the purples, and the greens of the calm sea mingle their moving colours under a dazzling sun. Here and there other happy islands entreat the visitor, with their shelving beach of shining sand, to brave the stretch of intervening sea and gain their shores. The whole scene flashes upon the traveller like some glad surprise. "Here," he says, "is what I have been looking for—that which I thought could never exist."

We cross to Dinard in the little screw steamer which starts from the harbour. It is a beautiful afternoon. As we draw away from the great stone wall of the harbour, St. Malo, left behind us, runs up into its proper perspective, and there it lies, snug in its grey ramparts, a city of the elect, a shining tribute to those who erected it more than 300 years ago. The cathedral spire marks the centre of the town, and around this white and graceful point rises a regiment of picturesque roofs, tinged a faint grey purple colour with a touch of red here and there. Below this exquisite crown of colour the old houses stand out in dazzling zling white, with purple shadows and brilliant sunshine alternately touching the picture.

Every day these rapid little screw-steamers, which ply from the harbour wall across the stretch of dazzling turquoise-blue waters which separate Dinard from St. Malo, are crowded with gay passengers, dressed in flannels and Panama hats. When the tide is out, these little boats—no bigger than an ordinary fisherman's sailing boat—cannot get into the harbour at St. Malo, and they steam down to a rocky point under the shelter of that island called the "Grand Bé," to the top of which people climb to look at the tomb of the great French poet, Chateaubriand.

Is there any sea-trip more delightful early in the morning, or "in the all-golden afternoon" (as Tennyson has it), than this crossing from St. Malo to Dinard? First the long walk at low tide along the stone path cut in the rocks—a path fringed with exquisite embroidery of golden sea-weed, which is so softly lifted and swayed by the caress of the incoming tide. Then, the distant panorama of ocean, with all its emerald colours, its greens, purples, and vivid, sparkling blues. One goes on board the little boat, which steams noiselessly away. One sees all the rocks under the clear salt water; passes swimmers luxuriating in the cool depths. Now St. Malo grows smaller in the distance. It is gathered up within its wall, and there sits this marvellous ancient City of the Sea, on the heights which its builders and Nature herself created for it. One lands at Dinard in a little harbourage which is a daily marvel of gorgeous colours—blue jackets and jerseys of fishermen; brown, yellow, golden sails of fishing boats. Rocks and seaweed lit by the long slanting rays of an afternoon sun, and on the sea all the dimples of the flying wind, and the shadows of the flying clouds; or, on a calm day, under the sea all the shadows of the pebbles and the rocks.

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As we near this harbourage one looks back across the blue intervening waters at a city which resembles some fantastic palace built by the hands of fairies. Landing at Dinard, we turn sharp to the right, and climb a path which leads by the cliff to a piece of garden overhanging the sea. We have been struck whilst yet on the boat by a spot of brilliant colour on the cliff. And now we find it is a garden high up on the cliff and sloping to the edge of a precipice. Here a flash of scarlet geraniums, thickly bordered with what the gardener tells us is a new species of purple violet —the flower-beds surrounded with grass of a surprisingly fresh and beautiful green—flings so brilliant a contrast of colour against the turquoise of the sea, which again seems to challenge the virgin whiteness of the walls of St. Malo

in the distance, that one feels rooted to the spot with admiration.

A large flagstaff was erected in the brilliant-flowered garden, and against the blue of a cloudless sky there flutters out lazily a long flag divided into two halves of colour, one bright yellow, the other dark blue.

But Dinard is not to be compared with St. Malo from the point of view of the picturesque or the historically beautiful.

Let us, before we leave St. Malo, visit the tomb of the poet Chateaubriand. At low tide there is a pathway between the rocks and we can climb up on to yonder green island, and there, high above the sea and facing out to the wide main, we come upon a granite slab, on which stands a granite cross, surrounded by railings between which the butterflies, passing idly on their way across the hill, flutter carelessly.

Not a word of inscription. But all France knows who lies there. There is something barbaric, and that smacks of defiance, in the absence of orthodox inscription. One feels that the great poet has done with speech and that he has chosen this spot, detached at high tide from the mainland, to commune alone with the sea he loved, and that in the wordless rush of brine-laden breezes he finds more music than in stanzas of poetry graven upon the granite slab.

Those who can read the poet's last wish aright know that he deemed all inscription to himself unnecessary, and that the cross which stands there on the rocks overlooking the emerald sea is set up as a memorial of the poet's love of nature.

THE CHILDREN OF ST. MALO.

When I speak of the children of St. Malo I do not necessarily mean the children of the rich residents or of the rich visitors, who walk with their best dresses on the firm part of the sand and are not allowed to climb the rocks; whose faces are proud and glum and who may not dance wildly at twilight on the great sandy carpet under the ramparts, nor roll in the sand with frantic cries of glee.

I mean the children of the poor people who work and live at St. Malo, and whose parents earn their bread by fishing or working in the town.

These children come out of school at four in the afternoon. I know the hour well, for the pattering of their feet on the road that leads under the porte des Champs-Vauvert and down the rugged pathway over the rocks, has become an accustomed sound to me.

There is Raoul Pauvré, cheeky, sturdy, little four-year-old, with a great head and firm legs and a blue frock. How soon the tears come in his blue eyes, where a moment ago he defied the whole world of English, French, and Dutchmen to abash him! Ah, Raoul!—was it not horribly sad sitting still to have your portrait painted?—with the great head which would roll from side to side, because it was so heavy.

And you! Marie—frail and delicate flower of the sea! Why do you run hatless on the rocks? Your bare legs and feet are yellow as the sand they tread—your eyes are light like the light one finds in clear pools at low tide. Your voice is tender and haunting and modest and true.

Your sister Marcel is much stronger than you and does not cough. She runs wild and climbs a dangerous wall, where if she slipped she would be dashed to pieces.

But below on the sands in the setting of the sun a little girl with black hair and ruddy cheeks is dancing, dancing and shouting with joy—all alone—all alone. She looks up though, now and again, to those in the sort of gallery overhead, which is really a stone balustrade under the ramparts, where a few others and myself are leaning over and watching her.

She is, according to her own declaration, "une petite anglaise." "Je suis une petite anglaise" are her first words to a stranger.

Her mother, a woman of easy morals, came from Guernsey, and went back, leaving the child deserted at St. Malo. A St. Malo man, who might be called a poor man were it not that he had three boys and a good wife, took and adopted the little English girl, who was two years old and was hungry and knew no one. And now two years have passed and they will not give her up, and she does not want to go to her mother. She calls the new people her mother and her father and her brothers. And she dances round and round on the sand down there when the tide is low at sunset, and she twirls round three times and falls, laughing, in the sands. And she runs forward and falls again. "Je suis une petite anglaise," but she wants to live always here, where the firm sands are, and where twice a day the rippling water comes whispering round the "Grand Bé," under the Tomb of Chateaubriand, bringing with it the colours of

precious pearls and jewels, and covering softly the stone path that connects at low tide the "Grand Bé" with the mainland.

ST. LUNAIRE.

(Not far from St. Malo.)

I do not know what there is in a church, but if one has once been brought up in a country rectory with one's brothers and sisters, there is something at once sweet and sorrowful in an old, old church found crumbling to death in the country, with the bright sunlight pouring into it.

One stands here and thinks of one's mother.

The old stone crucifix in the little yard of the church at St. Lunaire is all crumbling away. And inside the ancient church one shows you (and she is only a little girl with a church key almost as big as herself) "le vrai tombeau de St. Briac."

The sunlight cannot find its way on to this stone coffin with the figure of St. Briac lying on the top of it, in the dark and the solemn dust.

Hark at those bells. They might be ringing still in the Rectory Church at home—in that other quiet village which is now only a dead memory laid to rest for ever, under a huge yew tree full of live green leafage and powerful purple shadows on the trunk and the vast branching arms.

Ding-dong. Let me stand here for a moment against this altar, little girl. You cannot tell why I delay and look at what the others do not trouble about. Yes, the roof is all crumbling for a fall. But the old altar is still bright with gold and trim with its geometric lines. All my home is brought back to me, and my anxious but somewhat tranquil childhood stands before me in this summer light under the shadows of the nave.

MONT ST. MICHEL
and
THE COTE D'EMERAUDE.

August, 1907.

Here at last is a little mystery, solitude and silence. A little whispering and running of waters across forty miles of sands, in the twilight, after the long, noisy day. What a message of tranquillity and melancholy!—something speak-

ing from afar off—the words forwarded from a distant horizon of sea—and handed on and on over ridges of flat sand, over quicksands where only the seagull can pass with safety, from far out where deep waters lie.

Quick—gather up your paints and your sketch-book. All unperceived, the narrow channels of water have grown into lakes, have widened into unfordable canals. And still the water runs on, whispering, pushed by an unseen force of distant tides, the hidden impulse of unfathomable deeps, pressing those slender messengers of the tide across the barren wastes of bare and dangerous sand. No music descends from the tall, prickly towers of the cathedral. The voice of history is silent, hiding her thousand secrets. We know the monks of Benedictine lived well here, drank good wine in the hall of sixty windows, roasted whole oxen in the magnificent kitchen. That the prisoners groaned in their dungeons, when the mountain was cut off from the mainland by the incoming sea.

I hear the voices of Americans around me. And one, a beautiful American girl, leans her proud, queenlike head on her hand. Her elbow is round and shapely. She reminds me of some proud sailor girl who goes through life steering her ship straight and true and looking out at wide horizons, full of a dauntless will—a scornful courage. She figures well up here on the mountain. She is not abashed by this magnificent scenery. She moves and speaks as if it all belonged to her.

Neither is she one of those Americans who are always in a hurry. We remember one party who, immediately upon arriving in the morning, inquired the afternoon trains for St. Malo, and then contented themselves with photographing one another in their spic and span costumes, in the narrow street. It is an insult to Mont St. Michel and a piteous waste of travelling expenses to hurry away thus after a casual glance at the surroundings. One misses thus all the enchantment of glorious sunsets on the wet sands, of effects of flying clouds on the vast table-land at low tide, and all the mystery of twilight, with an incoming tide, and night with its moonlight splendour.

One cannot help being somewhat amused at the conduct of the dear old white-capped ladies who serve as guides up the rocky paths. They describe things historical and picturesque to you in admirable slow and distinct French, but just when you begin to get really interested, and to arrive at such a height as gives you the full panorama of Brittany and Normandy coasts below, they announce to you with a smile that that is as far as they go, and leave you outside

the first grey barrier walls of the abbey itself. So your tips are split up into several fragments, or multiplied, if you are generous, by the time you have seen everything that there is to be seen.

The much-advertised museum is certainly worth a visit. It gives wax-work representations of the prisoners who were confined long ago in the dungeons of the mount, and contains also a fine picture-gallery, including water-colours, oil paintings, medals, old swords and bullets found in the surrounding sands and on the rock itself, and other interesting antiquities.

The Mont St. Michel is unique, because there is a certain sense of insecurity always surrounding you. The voice of the incoming tide has something soft, awful and mysterious in its accents, for it has swallowed many unhappy victims, some of whom saw the water run across the flat sands for miles, and reach them while they were held in the deadly grip of the quicksands.

People nowadays walk out and see the quicksands—those which are the less dangerous spots. You stamp on them, and all the sand quivers like a jelly. There is no foundation underneath this sand. Your boot goes under, and you have to pull very hard to get it out. Imagine that you are all alone. That you have sunk in up to your shoulders. The only sound heard is that of a seagull, which swings screaming above you. Then you hear the sudden quick whispering of the tide. A blue carpet with a white hem is being unrolled faster than a man can run, over forty miles of golden sands. It reaches you. You are lost.

Up on the rocks the great cathedral throws a purple silhouette of spire and turrets down on the sand below. A beautiful picture for us who are safe on the ramparts. We can almost fancy we hear the chanting of the Benedictine monks in the vast nave of their rock-bound abbey.

It is now dinner-time. We climb a rugged staircase in the rocks and enter a great dining-hall. This is the Hotel Poulard Ainé, and a hundred guests sit down almost every night. Through the great window at one end of the room one sees a steep wall of rocks—the real rock of Mont St. Michel—ascending almost perpendicularly. One thinks of the dungeons that lie hidden inside this rock, in the dark subterranean passages of the abbey, in which one can even now easily lose oneself.

Here Barbés starved and was eaten of rats in his iron cage.

Now the mountain is harmless, but it remains the most majestic historical monument in France. There is prac-

tically but one hotel—the Hotel Poulard. But there are various little annexes of this hotel, and everybody goes to the Hôtel Poulard Ainé to taste Mrs. Poulard's celebrated omelette. You can see her cooking it over the huge open chimney of the old-fashioned fireplace. Here the chickens are all turning on their spit, just before seven o'clock, the dinner hour. It is all, all very delightful and old-fashioned. But the most beautiful sight is the incoming tide, racing in long level lines across the intervening sands. It covers great spaces by degrees. Acres and acres of ground disappear. But there still remain great, gleaming spaces of yellow sand. At last all is water.

And away out on the sands at low tide. How far can you go? As far as the Rock of Tombelaine. But take care. You walk for three miles first on level sands. Where the receding tide has left ridges, there the sand is good and firm. But where there are no lines or ridges, and the sand looks like sheets of molten lead, there you may sink.

Just before you reach the rock of Tombelaine you come upon a sheet of water. It is a little river which is flowing to the sea across the sand. You can wade through it easily. The sand is rather soft. There are quicksands the other side between the river and the rock. You can cross them with average safety. On your return you may meet, grouped round one of the lorn, lone boats that lie on the great, silent shore, a strange people, the fishermen and boys of the Mount.

They have come out there to dig for shellfish, which are abundant. Their figures look absurdly tiny out on the great waste of the vast, wind-swept sands. Their legs are bare and brown. They wear caps and blue linen knickerbockers and short black coats. In their eyes is the hard, blue light of the sea. They walk in stooping attitudes, as though they were still dragging at the nets.

When they come back to the Mount, after a day or a night of absence, their eyes look strange, like the eyes of men who have gone deep into Nature's secret, and into whose hearts has penetrated something of the wildness and the loneliness of Nature herself.

But at seven o'clock in the evening you can see them in their tiny cottages high up on the mountain. They are smoking their pipes and talking nice, comprehensible French, which shows that after all they are perfectly human when the great desolation of the wind-swept waters and the dangerous sands is not upon them.

A building, parts of which date back to 800 years ago, and which has been the scene of some of the most bloody

conflicts in history (for the English again and again tried to obtain possession of the Mount), must needs possess a magic and a mystery which make themselves felt always and which impress every traveller.

Thus it is that a journey to Mont St. Michel has become a sort of pilgrimage for those who have travelled far and wide, who have withstood the world's buffetings and have become blasé to the majority of sight-seeing.

Here in this great loneliness they find the sympathetic voice of Nature calling to them over the wastes. Here is every imaginable consolation—the sea, the rocks, the wild, restless gulls with their mournful cries, the little gardens thick with climbing flowers, the old chapels with their coloured windows, in which no sound is heard except the buzzing of July bees, who have found their way in through the open windows. And here on Sunday, in these three little rows of front benches, sit the school children of the mountain, guided thither by the old sister, in her wide white hood and black cloak, with a gold cross on her breast. She has guided a generation of children up to this rock-built chapel above the seas.

When you have finished your café cognac before the blazing log fire on the ground floor of the Hotel Poulard, the garçon of the hotel gives you a Chinese lantern with a little candle-light glowing inside, and you ascend the rocky staircase in the open air to your bedroom on the heights above. "Rein de plus charmant" than the effect of these little lanterns going up in the darkness.

Perhaps also you will be tempted to take a stroll round the ramparts and up to the abbey in the dark—or maybe in the moonlight. There you will see, towering far above you, the huge, jagged outline of the cathedral. The summit of this mighty edifice seems to touch the black skies. There are all sorts of little staircases by which you can climb down again. You come upon gardens with locked *grilles,* inside which shine in the moonlight tall and graceful crucifixes. Below you the lights in a few cottage windows gleam like jewels in the darkness.

All around this Mount the waters and the sands stretch, indescribably *triste* in their great solitude and silence.

Visitors from New York, London, or Paris feel this weighty silence. Here there is no traffic, no tramways, no newsboys shouting the evening paper. Everybody goes to bed at ten o'clock!

If you lose your hat on these sands, you may run for

seven miles after it and *then* not get it. I lost some papers from my sketch book and I saw them running away as far as the eye could reach. They never halted in their course for a moment, for the sands were flat as a billiard-table, and the wind blew steady from the East.

Chasing your hat in the street is dull sport compared to chasing it over quicksands.

The best advice that the native fishermen can give you if you find yourself all of a sudden up to your waist in moist sand, and no firm ground then under your feet, is to lie on your back and then try and roll over and over till you succeed in rolling to the left or to the right, and reach firm ground. "Il ne faut pas piquer debout!" said this weather-beaten Muriel, who has lost one arm. "Piquer debout" means to stand upright like a spear, which naturally results in your speedily boring a hole with your own feet, which ultimately becomes your grave.

Muriel of the one arm and the iron hook for his second hand, risks his life each day on the windy sands to gather a basketful of "coques"—a common shellfish found near the surface of the sand, which is good eating, and finds a ready sale.

A journey to Tombelaine, the rocky island that stands in the sea, three miles away from Mont St. Michel, is worth the trouble, for those who love a fine pile of sea-girt or sand-girt rocks of brilliant yellows and greys, and peopled only by a few birds.

Here till recently near the summit one found a spring of fresh water. It is now choked with stones. A few ruined ramparts still exist—an old window in a crumbling battlement, and the remains of a cottage which was inhabited not long ago by a man and his family—you can see the ruins of a kitchen-garden.

A wild waste of sand and water surrounds the island. The landing is dangerous, as the strong currents of the incoming and outgoing tides rush round the rocks at the foot of the island and hollow great pits under the treacherous sands.

Here you may sink in one instant up to your shoulders, on a spot which but yesterday was marked by the fishermen themselves as safe—for the moving sands change from day to day, and to-morrow the treacherous ground may, by a trick of the tide, become firm sand again.

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Before we leave St. Malo I am tempted to relate the actual experience of an artist friend of mine who, having passed some weeks in that beautiful spot, was so enraptured with the poetic charm of the place that he lost all track of the practical side of the question, and postponed his departure until his hotel bill reached a figure which was, to him, so colossal that he was obliged to have recourse to strategy in order to escape with his paintings from the hotel. I shall now proceed to tell the story in his own words:—

July 27, 1907.

"I excuse myself for being misled one moment into the kingdom of literature by an event at once dramatic and sordid, which happened at half-past eleven at night in a narrow street in St. Malo, where you can almost touch the wall opposite. Bad characters march and shuffle below in the narrow passage, thieves examine stolen purses, and cats, such as Tennyson would have loved to describe in poignant poetry, slink by on padded paw, or scream like devils when the moon is full.

"I was looking down on this passage in the ancient, historical town one night, when the clock struck eleven, but I thought it was too early yet to do what I wanted to do.

"My bag—a mere ten-franc valise purchased in the Avenue de l'Opéra—was packed to bursting; impossible to fasten the lock, but the straps held firm and a long coil of rope was fastened to the leather handles.

"I lifted the heavy bag on to the stone ledge outside my window. Then I heard whispers:

"'Ici! Ici! Mais oui—C'est lui! Regarde!'

"Evidently the servants in the kitchen below, who belonged to this Hotel de l'Union, could see what I was doing, and that I was about to descend my bag by a strap from the window, after running up a bill of 150 fr. which I could not pay.

"I then perceived on the wooden shutters of the house opposite ours, in the narrow passage, certain reflections, which moved as though a candle were being passed rapidly from side to side. But these reflections appeared outlined on solid wooden shutters opposite and the sound of the footsteps which accompanied the mysterious movements of the shadows came from the ground floor.

"How to reconcile the situation? Shadows on the level of the first floor and footsteps crunching a stone pavement,

such as the cobbles of the kitchen on the ground floor? The fact was, there was a light in my room and the servants in the kitchen directly underneath me had perceived all that I was doing, outlined in a shadow picture on the wooden shutters which faced my window.

"That was how I never actually descended my bag at night-time into the narrow passage near the fish-market of the Place Poissonnière, St. Malo, where on Friday and Tuesday mornings rang so gaily the echoing footsteps of the wooden-shoed fisherwomen.

. . . . . .

"I sauntered out early the following morning, before many servants were awake, from Hotel de l'Union. I had a coffee somewhere and went down under the great portico, or archway, that gives on the noble sea.

"Oh, how quiet it was there, that early, early morning, after all the fuss and worry of debts that created turmoil in my mind!

"There was the great sea, the same as usual, but not the same. A vast mist overhung rocks, pools, and the far-spreading tide. The island of the Grand Bé was gradually growing visible, throwing off minute by minute its silky veils of cloud. I went right out on the rocks and sat down on a furthermost point.

"There I heard presently a cornet, which sounded in the military barracks over the ramparts of the ancient city. There were answering movements to this and then a long-drawn music, such as hunters might make coming from a forest. It was the dawn of the life of a new day in this beautiful, fortified city, which I was obliged to leave. Why was I going back to Paris?

"All was so calm and beautiful here. I could not tear myself away. As yet none of the world were up and about. I had, truth to tell, no lucrative occupation to go back to in Paris. I had other troubles about a girl. I could slip away from life here, near the Tomb of Chateaubriand, where the seagulls make those witching, but melancholy, cries.

"But no. . . . It was beautiful—it was the dawn of a day. I went up the rocks and re-entered the ancient city by way of the great, grave, stone doorway, and as it was not yet time to go to the post-office to ask if there was a registered letter for me, I turned in at the great cathedral doors, which were open. Magnificent and happy silence!

. . . . . .

"It was just after coming out of the cathedral and entering the post-office to ask for my letter—about 8.30 a.m.—

that a police officer told me he wanted me to come with him.

"My wire to Paris from the police office read: 'Arrested by police. Please send 150 fr.' I waited, shut up in the police-office, with five or six gendarmes with swords round me, from 9 a.m. till 4 p.m., when in reply to my telegram came a mandat télégraphique for 50 fr., which, by authority of the Procurator, was seized in its entirety by the hotel proprietor, he giving me as a favour 3 fr. (three francs) to get back to Paris with.

"I was happily in possession of a billet de faveur, or first-class railway ticket, which the newspaper for which I write had procured for me from the Chemin de Fer de l'Ouest.

"Ill-bred sergeant in the police-office (see sketch) said that 'the only carriage I should ride in would be the prison van,' and that I should eat the prison bread, and that 'when he had the time' would be the time when I should see a magistrate to make my complaints. At first he refused absolutely to allow me to send a telegram to the Paris office, and said that he did not at all think they would ever send me any money and that he could do nothing to assist me unless he was ordered to do so.

Roberts, of the Hotel de l'Union, certainly sent me up a good lunch in a basket, where I ate and drank amongst the police officers. He was not going to starve the bird that might possibly lay the golden egg.

"'C'est plutôt des mensonges,' said the tall gendarme, when I told the exact truth of the story to the Procurator. The Procurator ordered that all my luggage should be conveyed back from the railway station to the hotel and that all the money which came from Paris should be handed direct to Roberts.

"I was arrested without a warrant of any sort or any written paper being shown me.

"When I threatened the police-sergeant that I would go out, as these were illegal proceedings, he pushed me violently into a chair in the corner of the police-office and threatened me with dry bread and the police van.

"But the most amusing thing is, that when I got back to Paris and some time after I had joined the staff of the 'New York Herald' at (to me) a princely salary, my pictures sold very well, and I sent down sixty francs to Monsieur Roberts, which he gladly took in payment of the balance of my bill and sent me by return of post my much-loved water-colour of the market-place, which he had been holding as security for the debt, but which now hangs in my room.

"What a fuss over nothing!

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"In America they say one is not a citizen until one has been arrested. Following this line of argument, I seem to be a citizen of St. Malo. And perhaps this is the reason why I revisit the dear old town whenever I have an opportunity, always stopping, by preference, at the Hotel de l'Union, where Monsieur Roberts and I have long since made up our little differences."

MADEMOISELLE DUVAL.

August, 1908.

If there is treasure hidden who shall know
Whether to find it hidden high or low?

Some thread that reels from sources yet unknown
Runs through our lives and spells some mystic sign,
But dimly writ, like texts on ancient stone.

They say that those who run may read, but I
Find that Life's riddles are not solved betwixt
The rising and the setting of a Sun;
And sometimes have I lost for having run—
Then walking at a snail's pace I would try,
But ever was the golden hour wrecked
And evermore the Prize by Fate was fixed
A little further than the mountains lie.
Thus roseate illusion, coy to yield
Her charms mysterious to mortal man
From those escaped who walked, like those who ran.

If then 'tis true that she I loved and lost
Basks in Italian valleys with her babe,
Better it were, like Enoch Arden, I
Should moulder here, pent in the town and die—
Or visit her like one unknown, who comes
'Mid vagrancies and wanderings to light
By chance in her sweet village. There a lake
With mirrored mountain tempts his hand to paint
Its splendour on a canvas. So he wends
His way into the village at nightfall——
Sleeps, wondering how to meet her, and next day
Makes portraits in the village here and there,
And comes at last to light upon her house,
As if by chance; but knowing all the while

That he will hear her talk and see her smile
Who was his dainty mistress for a day——

(Never the first glad meeting he forgot
By old St. Malo's rock-strewn beach—July
Set all the salt pools sparkling with delight.)

Now on his canvas grows her shapely head
While her white arms the little one enfold.
Her husband says: "Ah, this will cost me dear,"
And asks him how he fared along the road
And whence he comes and whither he is bound.

At last, the portrait finished, he heavily dwelt
On her loved features and drunk deep her thoughts
Says to those gathered: "Friends, I thank you all.
My work is ended. There is nought to pay.
Guard it and think sometimes of me and say:
'God bless the wanderer on his lonely way.'"

THE CHANNEL TUNNEL.

October 31, 1911.

It is scandalous that a civilised nation should obstruct the construction of a Channel Tunnel.

It has been long ago suggested by the French that such a tunnel could come up on the English side on an artificially-constructed island, linked with the mainland by a bridge which could be destroyed by a single shell fired from a British man-o'-war. As this suggestion was written in French, it probably escaped the attention of Great Britain.

The other day I was crossing to France, after one of my flying trips to England, and the boat tossed for three-quarters of an hour outside Boulogne Harbour, unable to enter, the signals being against us. The scene was epic. At the mercy of the winds and waves the poor little steamboat tossed up and down, luggage rolled from side to side, beautiful women groaned in costly cabins (where every factor of comfort except equilibrium was in evidence), the wind whistled drearily through the spars and rigging, and those who wished to remain on deck for the sake of the fresh air were soaked with spray. We were two and a half hours crossing the Channel. We are one hundred years behind the times.

When are we to have direct railway communication between London and Paris?

FLYING TRIPS TO ENGLAND.

"YE HYPOCRITES!"

August 12, 1911.

I am so amused, when I come on one of my flying trips to England, to hear what opinion the English girl has of the French girl. "Oh," said Miss Maud Green, an actress whom I ran up against in Coventry, after I had told her quite spontaneously and without any malice that the majority of French girls were undoubtedly prettier and more tastefully dressed than the English:

"Ah," she said, "but the worst of it is they make themselves so cheap!"

This actress then drank up three whiskies and sodas, pressing her very ugly and bad-mannered friend to drink at my expense also, and forthwith invited herself and her friend at my expense to the theatre for the evening.

They make themselves so expensive and they condemn their prettier French sisters for "making themselves so cheap!"

. . . . . .

In France every young girl is gay—her birthright is a splendid one—she knows that the French woman is regarded by every quarter of the world as the ideal type of female beauty She is proud of that heritage and lives up to it. She dresses up to her part. She walks like a Princess, and sometimes more gracefully than a Princess.

I do not think there is any dispute about these facts. It has been said again and again by those who are men and women of the world and have travelled, that even the Parisian cocotte is a brighter, more beautiful, and more bewitching companion than the cocotte of any other nation.

I scarcely like to compare her with the English demimondaine. Alas, it is not the latter's fault that she is forced to adorn herself only with ugly attributes, in place of her French sister's natural gaiety and delightful tastefulness.

It is not the Englishwoman's fault. Far from it. It is the fault of that prudish section of English "society" (very often a middle-class section rather than a high-class), whose cold reserve and bitter scorn for everything which is not

"Marriage" makes the poor little cocotte feel that she is indeed as much a pest as the vermin which we destroy in our kitchens.

Many people are in the position of not being able to marry—perhaps they were not rich enough to marry the lady of their choice; perhaps they are devoted to some absorbing line of study and they find that the expense of a regular ménage makes deep inroads into their small private fortune or tiny hand-to-mouth income.

The laws of men are very often unfortunate, and in England we are face to face with the law of Marriage, and in the British mind there is absolutely nothing between that and the streets.

All honest flirtations, all serious intrigues between two young people of the opposite sexes who love each other without asking anybody's permission, are fiercely frowned down by anxious parents—parents who are not anxious for their children's welfare in the least; but are anxious for what and world will say—and who dread lest their previous little daughter (a valuable asset in the family fortunes) should either "create a scandal" or "marry beneath her."

In other words, having riotously amused themselves by bringing five or six children into the world, the parents think they have obtained right of possession over them just as goods and chattels, and have acquired the monopoly to sell them to this or that man or woman as husband or wife.

They are horrified at the idea that love could exist untrammelled by their interference and without being trained up some conventional pea-stick which they have planted in the narrow back-garden of their mind.

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After five years' sojourn in Paris, during which I often led a happy and interesting life, I returned for a space to England. One afternoon I was released from a rush of work, and, walking through a country town in Warwickshire, I saw an English girl of certainly not extraordinary attractions—but not so decidedly plain as some—and, by way of a test, I invited her to come to tea in the pastry-cook's.

A similar request in Paris would always have been received by such a gracious smile and, if the lady was married, a few pleasant words explaining that it was impossible; I should then have lifted my hat and withdrawn, carrying with me only a pleasant reminiscence of a beautiful woman; for a French woman of any attractions considers it perfectly natural that she should be admired and never regards her admirer in the light of a criminal! This is strange, but it is a

fact—and a very hard fact for a plain, stoney-faced British woman to swallow!

Note the difference in the incident I am describing. My invitation was seriously meant, but was accepted in the following fashion:

"WHAT DO YOU MEAN?" she said, in a tone of voice that suggested that I had asked her to jump over the moon. A rabbit has very little brain, but might easily have given a more courteous response to such a simple invitation.

Although there were several people passing us, I purposely raised my voice and said: "When I ask you to come to tea I mean what I say! I mean, do you wish to come to tea. And if you don't want to, or if your nature is too disagreeable to give a polite reply, then I certainly don't want to take tea with you!"

Here she found a brilliant though perhaps somewhat ungrammatical reply, for she said: "You had better clear off!"

I laughed and rejoined: "Don't be afraid, Madam! You are not so good-looking as to be able to dispense with ordinary politeness and yet remain attractive!" And so I left her, quite leisurely, and filled with grave reflections. She was certainly not at all so amenable to conversation as her sisters the Suffragettes of London, with whom, in the streets, I had often had such really interesting conversation! And yet this girl was not disagreeable by nature, but had been taught by others to be disagreeable.

November 24, 1911.

It must be perfectly clear to all those who come to the consideration of this matter with an open mind that the strict rule of preliminary introduction which obtains in England would not be necessary were civilisation further advanced.

In a perfectly enlightened community, social conversation —the natural preliminary to normal acquaintance—would be possible without any introduction whatever; in many cases the mutual exchange of thought would speedily terminate owing to incompatibility of the two natures; but frequently a valuable opportunity for lasting friendships (now completely lost) would be afforded; and nothing strikes me, when I make a flying trip to England, as more full of significance than this feature of the present Suffragette movement.

Here, for the first time in England since centuries, a sound basis and reasonable excuse is afforded to men of

honest intentions and ordinary intellect of conversing, at any rate for a brief moment, with those of the opposite sex, without being suspected of malevolent intentions.

I can stop in the streets of London to buy a copy of "Votes for Women" and I can engage in a reasonable conversation about questions of the day in France and England, without being met by that staggering exclamation: "WHAT DO YOU MEAN?" or, "You had better clear off!"

I simply note this fact as a new phase which has its significance and which stands forth amidst one's impressions each time one makes a flying trip to England.

And I conclude by saying that here, for the first time, a lady, who stands selling newspapers in the street, can reasonably engage in conversation with one of the opposite sex without exposing herself to that terrible weight of suspicion, ridicule, and scorn which in England descends upon the heads of all those of opposite sexes who speak without introduction.

I am not concerned here with all the devious arguments advanced for female suffrage. It seems to me perfectly common sense that those who pay taxes should vote, but I do not live much in England. I am simply laying stress upon a feature of the movement which I find a hopeful one, and which seems to open up the possibility of a vast social movement towards a better understanding between men and women.

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I remember so well one night, when I was in London engaged in the technical work of putting this book on the market, walking to and fro on the platform of one of the Underground stations, quite abstracted in thought, my mind ranging over a host of details that had to be settled, I dropped something from my portfolio without noticing it, when I heard a lady's voice twice call my attention to my loss and, looking up, I saw, standing with her husband, a beautiful English lady. They were returning from the theatre.

I raised my hat and turned to pick up the papers I had lost.

I do not want to make too much of this refreshing incident; but hundreds of women in England would have been afraid to call my attention to what I had dropped, and I presumed that this must have been an aristocrat, who was so far removed above the reach of vulgar, prudish public opinion as to possess that courage and independence, com-

bined with refinement and dignity, which permits a good woman to speak to a man without previous introduction.

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One of my most expensive and least agreeable flying trips to England was accomplished when, in April of the year 1908 (some three years after I had been in Paris), I heard of the loss of a large tin box which I had left at No. 40, Guilford Street, Russell Square.

The Lost Box at 40! What a horrible and abiding nightmore! I had not wished, when I left England, to take excess luggage with me to Paris, so, at the last moment, I left this box with my landlady, Mrs. Ravetto, sending her five shillings from time to time to look after it. The box contained so many manuscripts (typewritten and others) which could never be replaced; so much prose and poetry that could never be rewritten—because they were composed in the freshness of spring mornings, when hopes were yet high, years and years ago.

There were files full of letters, signed by such names as Lord Avebury, Marie Corelli, Heineman—all who were interested in the humble efforts of a beginner. There were precious sketch-books and family photographs; there was an old mahogany writing-desk, with slanting green cloth surface and secret drawers full of documents, and beautiful letters from my cousin, signed Mary. And this tin box, measuring some 2 ft. 5 in. long by 1 ft. 7 in. high, was sold by auction with a lot of crockery, in my absence, without my knowledge.

When it was too late I came flying across the Channel to find that Mr. Ravetto, who had formerly kept this apartment house, was in prison. It took me about three hours and fifteen shillings to find his wife, living under an assumed name, three streets distant.

She could not tell me where the box was.

She was an Italian, and my researches next led me into Soho, a foreign quarter of London, where, by dint of speaking French to some down-at-heel Italians, I was led to look for a certain man named Lot, a milkman with one eye, who had a shop in Great Ormond Street. When I told this to Gregory, he said: "Why! Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt, wasn't she?" Sure, I replied, perhaps Lot will know something about it—since none of my friends in London had cared to keep track of it, or advise me of the downfall of this corrupt house.

"Why, certainly, I remember your tin box," said the owner of the milk-shop. "It was a big box with a dint on the top.

It was kept in the kitchen of Mr. Ravetto's house. It was sold with a lot of crockery at the end of the auction sale. All Mr. Ravetto's furniture had been sold. I saw your tin box loaded upon a small one-horse van and driven away by the man who had bought it. Where did it go? How do I know? London is large. There were twenty vans outside the door that day. Trucks, donkey-carts, even wheelbarrows were used to cart the stuff away."

(There was a disreputable woman full of mystery up towards the top of Red Lion Street who said that, before the house was raided, Mr. Ravetto had often offered to sell her my box for ten shillings, but she had refused the offer, knowing that it was not his property.)

I rushed from Lot's milk-shop to the auctioneer's in Southampton Row. This item of the sale was not catalogued. They denied all knowledge of it. But I traced one of their workmen who had been present on the day of the sale. "Ah," he said, "it sometimes happens that at the conclusion of an auction sale a few odd lots are put up together and sold unofficially after the auctioneer-in-chief has gone. Doubtless it was thus with your tin box."

I learnt that this auction sale had taken place on March 4, 1908.

Miss Judith (calling herself Udita) of the Italian Hospital, Great Ormond Street, who had formerly been a domestic servant in the house in Guilford Street, told me of a great burning of papers which had taken place on March 4. Undisturbed by this ominous news, I continued my search, and, penetrating one day into the basement of 40 with Williams, one of the auctioneer's workmen, whose address I had found in the Hampstead Road, there was pointed out to me a large sack, which contained a certain quantity of my papers. It was then evident to me that my tin box had been emptied out and that these manuscripts, considered useless, had been bundled into a sack, while the rest of the contents of the box, the writing-desk, the history of the French Revolution in five volumes, etc., had been loaded on the van and gone away to Heaven knows where.

I shall never forget rushing backwards and forwards across the Channel after this box. I have never found it to this day. I was very hard up at the time and the cost of these trips was most burdensome. Yet each time I had saved up enough money to make another journey I would come across to that accursed London and follow up fresh trails. At last I gave up the search. A phlegmatic Scotland Yard detective, who had been deputed to help me, soon

fell out of the race and found nothing for me. I discovered the sack in the basement without his help.

I suppose all the other missing articles are now knocking about in some second-hand shop; and if this falls beneath the eye of their present owner he can get five pounds cash by returning them to me, to my London address: E. B. Parsons, c/o Chancery Lane Safe Deposit, 62, Chancery Lane.

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January 30, 1912.

After this sad experience of the lost box at 40, I became accustomed to visit England more frequently, and one day, when I had finished work with Mr. Herbert Ward, I packed my bag, raced from Rue Monsieur le Prince to the Gare du Nord in fifteen minutes (the chauffeur of the auto-taxi seemed to be executing a perfect Marathon) and the following afternoon at three p.m. I was standing on the quiet little pier at Lymington, Hampshire, waiting for the steamboat which was to carry me across to my home in the Isle of Wight.

It was about five years since I had been home.

I shall never forget this beautiful spring day; the Solent lying stretched like webs of shining silk before us and far off from the mainland the faint, sunstreaked outlines of that Garden of England.

The steamboat started. We threaded our way along the narrow lane of waters, between high wooden stakes which marked the varying depths, and buoys which swung when the seagulls lighted upon them. I was struck by the absence of all sounds, save the beautiful harmonies of Nature's music.

I had torn myself away from Paris in one of those abrupt moods when the thoughts fly uncontrollably towards home, towards the seagulls, the splash of the waves, the gorse hills, the waving of reeds swayed by the tide, the deep-mouthed baying of the guns in the sea forts.

As the little steamer moved on almost noiselessly across the Solent, the breeze freshened, and far away one decried, through veils of mist that danced in the sunlight, the cross that stands on the summit of High Down as a monument to the genius of Tennyson.

Are not the poems of that wonderful artist the nearest approach we have, in English, to the clarity of style and transparency of language that prevail in the best French

literature? And yet the great Poet Laureate justly complained that no one had succeeded in translating his works into French with any degree of success; so that their beauties are hidden from those of our neighbours across the Channel who read no language save their own.

As I gazed upon this great cross of granite I reflected that I was coming home too late. For my father had died whilst I was far away in Berlin, and so many thoughts came crowding over me, but softened, modified, and set to music by the ripple of all this wide expanse of waters glittering beneath the spring sunshine.

The delicious little cottage where my mother lived was like a perfect haven of rest. There was a little copse just across the road where nightingales sang in the hours of darkness. It seemed so strange to me that Miss Peyter was not there to hear them. But I had long walks over the downs and saw much that was new—the flowers, the dew, the gorse, the vast panorama of the seas to the south of the island. And then one afternoon, passing through a little wicket gate and across a field, I came to the gates of Lord Hallam Tennyson's beautiful park. I knew that if I sent in my card he would allow me to stroll about in these gardens; and already I heard the wild cry of the birds which he brought from foreign parts and which gave a note of tropical remoteness in the midst of this calm and gentle atmosphere of pastoral England.

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I made a little watercolour there—one of the most superb spots one could find in England, the view across the garden with the sea beyond. Lord Hallam Tennyson came out and showed me another view from the drawing-room window which was incomparably beautiful. I then took a boat from Freshwater Bay and went round under the high cliffs, where a lot of timber had been washed up from a wreck.

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I found it hard to tear myself away from this island. Although everything was very composed and orderly there, I heard a certain unconventional lark forgetting himself in the blue. The random ecstacy of his song was a revelation to me. He seemed to reel off whole stanzas of intoxicating praise. It was a delirium of gratefulness for some happiness concealed from us in the clover field beneath.

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Soon this flying trip was at an end; and then came Paris,

rushing up in all the wildness of its license out of these scented hours among the gorse hills.

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Miss Gladys Holmes must have her place in any comment on "Flying Trips to England." She was a rare exception to the actress who drank up the whisky and sodas.

Dear Gladys rode in a circus. She had an adorable figure. Snatches of the latest songs from all the London theatres and music-halls filled the house when she called to see me. We would paint and chat till the shadows lengthened in the beautiful gardens of the Great Ormond Street Hospital, over which my windows looked; and we would watch the nurses in their white caps as they strolled out to read their letters by the fountain under the great trees. Nobody seeing our boarding-house from the Guilford Street side would guess that the windows at the back could overlook such a charming garden. But Gladys knew. We met in the rain; but it was often sunshine as we sat talking by this window, listening to the pigeons who loved to dwell upon their dreamy notes hidden in the trees of the hospital gardens.

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But Gladys is too much alive to lend herself to actual description in a prosaic book. If she remained longer on these pages she would begin to kick the binding of the book off. "Bow-wow!" Let her go! That was a good scamper.

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In later years, as business began to improve in Paris, I could tell you (had I space) how these flying trips to England led me further and further afield. I explored the peaceful farm-lands of Warwickshire. I passed further north, sped once through the wonderful Pass of Killiecrankie. When daylight dawned we had crossed the Grampians. We were speeding express between the heathery hights near Kingussie. Hurrah for the bonnie braes and burns of the Highlands. Here is Inverness, with all its handsome maids and kilted laddies. And here we are, passing down the canal and out into the Loch. The steamer bears us away to Temple Pier—we are to know the charms of Drumnadrochit, the beauties of Glen Urquhart, to taste the fine, exhilarating, intoxicating air on the heights of Mount Melfourvenie; to make friends amongst the crofters; to paint mountain, lake, and fiery sunset.

Oh, of all flying trips to England, which can compare with this? Stand here on the ruined battlements of Castle Urqu-

hart, that miracle of ancient architecture, whose foot is planted in the fathomless lake. Chase the wild deer through the tangled forest; fish the salmon in the streams; watch the grouse disappear over the heather.

It was not British but American wealth and American patronage that enabled me thus to see my own country.

POSTSCRIPT.

I have endeavoured to present the public with a work of art at the price of four and sixpence, and in doing so I have not invited the co-operation of any publisher. I have preferred to make my appeal directly to the public and I await their verdict with equanimity.

I am not anxious to emulate the efforts of some who have time and patience to send a book or play round the entire British publishing market, meeting with thirty, forty, and fifty refusals, only to find (when they at length succeed in discovering a pubilsher and, contrary to the verdict of those who had refused the book, the volume scores a success) that more than three-quarters of the profits resulting from its sale must go into the pockets of the publisher.

Why is it that English publishers fight shy of any originality and character? The answer is clear. They wish to float large quantities of mediocre literary matter upon the market. It is impossible to find a constant and ample supply of meritorious and reliable work. Neither does the publisher wish the public to learn of the existence of such; for the people would immediately reject the mass of mediocre fiction with which at present the publishers feed them.

The literary market (which in the eyes of a publisher is on about the same standing with a pig market) would then be spoiled and many a harmful and unnecessary publisher would have to retire from business.

Let young and struggling authors take my remarks to heart. They may thereby be enabled to shape their course accordingly.

Our publishing system tends inevitably towards the corruption of literature and the encouragement of mediocrity.

Chatterton saw this, as he lay dying, the light of his genius extinguishing by a coalition of forces against which it was almost impossible to stand.

E. Bryham Parsons,
63, Rue Monsieur le Prince,
Paris.

APPENDIX.

"Frustra laboret qui omnibus placere studit."

Some who have glanced over my proofs speak as follows:

Troner said: "To h—ll with your proofs!—you promised to dine in the Holborn Restaurant.!"

Mayo said: "It is your book. You alone can decide what must be cut out."

Sadler complains that "that stuff about the Treatment of Horses in Paris is not sufficiently spicy for a Paris book."

I was not aware that I ever sat down to write a "spicy" book on Paris.

Sadler also says that my mission in life is to amuse people; that I am so terribly dull when I am serious. And that, in short, I ought to dance continually like a toy marionette before the public. He says, "You don't for one moment suppose that I think you really care a rap for the horses of Paris, do you? I want something spicy when I go home from my office at night and you give me that stodgy chapter on Cruelty to Animals!"

Sadler said that I had only one thing to fear—that the book would be ignored. But simultaneously he told me that if I used certain names I might get into trouble. So that it seems there are two things to fear—that the book may be ignored and that it may be noticed.

Oswy said that "The Real Paris" (page 138) was a disgraceful thing.

I reply that when I went to Paris I did not go expecting to find evil and I found abundance of good. You all in England look to Paris expecting to find evil, and here you thought to find it, and it does not exist, except in the mind of the English people, who fall into this trap. For the French Prefect of Police would rock in his chair with laughter (if he read this passage) to think that anybody could believe such a story about the Bois de Bologne.

If the delicate sarcasm contained in this passage, "The Real Paris," is overlooked, and it is taken seriously, that is not my fault. I wrote the lines to appease the malignant curiosity of one who was clamoring for information of this description and would not have been satisfied by any of less ludicrous order. Those who have carefully read my book can judge for themselves whether that is the real

Paris. So full of tender, touching, unconventional romance, of dainty, winsome gracefulness is the very breath of the real Paris, that I hesitate to draw the veil from off its face and confront it, in all its transparent beauty, with a stony British stare.

What right have I to open the door of the studio when the model is posing?

Perhaps, with her hand uplifted, and every intellectual sense on the alert, she is delicately fencing with a student, who chaffs her on some trait in her character, gracefully beating down one by one his arguments. Close the door of the atelier. "Le public n'entre pas ici."

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Oswy has also a couple of columns of criticism to write on the Bal de Quat'z Arts. "Your life has led you amongst people who are not really gentlemen or refined."

As Mr. Justice Vaughan Williams used to say, "I make no comment."

I am describing something that I saw.

I may mention, however, that no moral crusade waged by England or America would have the slightest effect in stopping the annual Bal de Quat'z Arts.

They are a people within their own gates.

The country has its own distinct individuality indelibly imprinted on it. It never has been or will be like America or England.

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November 2, 1911.

I saw Bernard Shaw at 4 p. m. this Thursday. He is a big, loose-cut man, with easy-fitting clothes—quite an artist to speak to.

His room was nicely lit, a lamp hanging over the large table. A picture of a gondola going over a speckled, moonlit sea. Good painting. At the prow of the gondola I think it was a black man, urging the beautiful craft forward.

Bernard Shaw said: "The French are more prudish than the English. I have a Frenchman going to take the part of a French character in my play, and I make him say in this play that for prudishness the French bourgeoise take the cake. Not only that—but this French actor says I am right in thus judging the French. Over here they don't care a bit about 'family life,' but it's all the world to the French. You tell me the students of the Ecole talk about the beourgeoise and mock them. Why, that just shows that the bourgeoise are very prudish.

"If you put so-and-so in your book you'll have private societies which exist in England for the suppression of immorality throwing up their hands, if not their heels, in the air. And, weighing it up, you stand to lose more by putting that in than you stand to gain by it. What is it anyway? It looks like an Egyptian thing!"

"Why," I said, "it's an entrance ticket to admit one model to the Bal de Quat'z Arts."

"Oh," he said, "if it's a document like that, that rather changes the case. Still, there will be people who will object to it."

The conversation was resumed—over another topic. "Here," I said, "is a little piece of MS. called 'Flying Trips to England.' You know, Mr. Shaw, when one has been away from England five years one comes back and sees things entirely different. Many of them strike one as very funny."

"Sit down in a chair, Mr. Parsons," he said, as soon as he saw the title, "Ye Hypocrites!" "and let me read this through. I'll never have time to take this up again."

"Well," he said, after reading it, "that's all right—of course, you know the French are more prudish than the English."

"You say they are more prudish in France," I objected, "but there you can live with a mistress, and it is considered a privilege to have one. Here in England you would be obliged to hide her."

"The students, at any rate," I said to him, "are free and easy—full of fun."

"Ah," he said, "the artists, that's a little coterie—they're not the bourgeoise."

I went away well satisfied. There was a little wicket-gate on the stairs, that reminded you of something in Pilgrim's Progress.

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Mr. Jerome K. Jerome writes to me from Monk's Corner, Marlow Common, under date July 5, 1911, as follows:

"My own advice would be to any man: 'never publish a book at your own expense.' If no publisher will take it up it would be almost evidence that the book stands very little chance with the public. Especially such a book as yours, for which there is a limited public. Have you tried Heinemann and Lane?"

Miss Marie Corelli writes me, under date of August 19, 1900, from Stratford-on-Avon, as follows:

"My friend, there is only one means of success—work

and patience. Finish one book thoroughly, as well as artistically, as you can, and then submit it to an honest and trustworthy firm. Do not offer any synopsis of your work, or any explanation. Do not consent to any expenses of publication. Start your work on its own merits. If merit their is it will be acknowledged. Be brave and hopeful—and calm and temperate. Success only comes through the hardest work and, what is still harder, the most invincible endurance and patience. May all luck attend you." (Signed) Marie Corelli.

"I have been ill—not 'too busy'—or I would have written you before."

(It is with mixed feelings that I read this letter, after the lapse of eleven years.—E. B. P.)

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With regard to my "postscript," I notice that the "Bystander" had recently to admit that: "The reading world is sickened, nauseated with flippancy. . . . Reading a batch of novels of the moment resembles a walk past the distorting mirrors in the Luna Park, Paris. In one we see ourselves long and lean, in another short and fat, in another broad-beamed, and in another swollen-headed. Life to-day needs more real, less unreal reflection."

This carries out the very point which I urge in my postscript. Young girls and men of twenty and thereabouts, to whom all that appears in print is sacred and bears the hallmarks of irrefutable dignity, apply themselves with the whole force of their youthful ingenuity to the study of trash like "Sunday Chatter," and "Fireside Stories." They think because it is in print that it is faultless. And on that model they base their own endeavors to write "literature." They do not know that the model is a false one.

A short time ago a young lady showed me a trifle in the shape of a story which, at any rate, bore the cachet of an independent, vivacious, and pleasant style. "But," she said, "it has been refused everywhere so I must set to work and try and write better." It never occurred to her to reflect whether the market was utterly corrupt and her style of writing was correct. She preferred to condemn herself, because "what the editor accepts is good and what he refuses is bad!" Yet, if publishers "know what the public want," how is it that the book market is admittedly flooded with rubbish?

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New York City, December, 1911.

Sturgiss and Walton (of 31 East 27th Street) said to

me through their manager, when I saw them in New York this winter:

"Your manuscript is so interesting, but—how shall I express it?— it seems too scattered" (he probably meant that it lacks continuity). "It would be such excellent material for an autobiographical novel—if you could cast it into novel shape."

"Some chain ought to exist on which these stories should be strung, like pearls upon a silken thread," I rejoined, smilingly.

"Well, that's a nice job for the mechanical novelist if he likes to try it. I will leave it to him, content to have stated the facts myself, and illustrated them to the best of my ability. If the public taste is so far *warped* that it cannot read anything unless it is in the shape of a novel (fact corrupted into fiction), then——"

And I left him standing there.

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Sadler complained that I should dream of using the water-colour of St. Malo. "The composition is bad," he said. "You can't get away from that. The high wall on the left of the picture," he insisted, "what's it doing there?"

"Why," I replied in an apologetic tone of voice, "it's there, you know. You can walk all round St. Malo on the top of it. You wish me to remove this high wall because it's not good composition; but if I did so the sea would come in and drown people."

Well, the fact is, I never had time to study painting. All the people I have ever worked for regarded it as an idle amusement. Monsieur Merson once said to me, "I could teach you painting if you could come regularly to the school. But if you have to leave at eleven o'clock to go and work in your bank——"

Just the same as you would draw a Christmas card, and take a colour-box and put a little red on the berries and give it to a friend as a souvenir of the festive season, saying, "Accept that as a private token of my friendship; it is not for the public, for it would never interest them." Thus do I fix up my Paris book, and bind it, and give it away to a few friends, to show them what Paris is like.

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(New York, 44 West 58th Street),
January 18, 1912.

I FORGOT TO MENTION——

So many things that I forgot to mention! People of no consequence, whose lives are interesting, and who ought to be mentioned.

There was the Concierge of Quai Malaquais—just next door to the Ecole des Beaux Arts. She used to keep my paint-box for me, and my unfinished canvases. If I left these canvases on the chevalet (easel) in the class-room (atelier) of the Ecole des Beaux Arts, they assumed weird and grotesque forms in my absence. I was but an amateur at oil painting, and some of the students found it droll to pousser plus loin mes études—there's no English for it. They liked to carry out my ideas a little bit further than I had done myself. They gave a wooden leg to my nude model, and put a sword in his hand. I objected, and carried the studies away to the Concierge next door, who kept them in her *loge* till the following morning, when I called for them, carried them back into the school, and continued them.

I remember, when first I joined the school, I had a carpenter make a large wooden paint-box for me. I left it in the school one morning and the following day I couldn't find it anywhere. I suspected some "blague"—which means a joke. But all the students were as serious as anything that morning. No one wore a smile. The usual greeting that I, as an Englishman, received, in those early days of my apprenticeship—an imitation of the English accent, given by a chorus of thirty—which made me feel that I was entering the Zoological Gardens—was wanting. That morning an air of grave mystery pervaded the atelier.

Everyone was at work, and only the model smiled.

"Mais, qu'est-ce que vous cherchez—nom d'une pipe!" cried someone. "I am searching for that wooden paint-box!" I exclaimed.

At last I saw it, hanging by a cord right up in the air, close to the ceiling.

After that I used to leave it with the Concierge next door. She was a tall, handsome, flourishing woman. I went into the courtyard, and used to call her name on the stairs. "Bon compte fait des bons amis," she used to say—or words to that effect, and she refused a tip of two francs for her kindly service. It seemed always springtime in that courtyard. A

bird sang in a cage; and she, the Concierge was young. And the shining river was flowing by the quai.

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Then there was the Nettoyage à Sec in the Rue d'Amsterdam. An elderly, white-haired English lady, who spoke in a soft voice and had lived in Paris for thirty years, managed this business. I used to take my white waistcoats there to get them washed. It was thus I made her acquaintance. It was pleasant to speak English sometimes. She had a French assistant in the shop, who "mocked herself not badly of the English people." "Je m'en moque pas mal, moi, de votre patois," elle m'a dit. What a charming street that was —the Rue d'Amsterdam! I often hear Americans say there is nothing in Paris. It seemed to me full of music.

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Another English family: the Van Praaghs in the Rue de Rivoli. The aged mother—who said she hated France, and lived there in preference to any other country. Her young, truculent, brilliant son—sharp as a needle—speaking French with a perfect Parisian pronunciation. I should never have his accent if I lived for five hundred years.

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What have I said of Paltz and his wonderful studio on the heights of Montmarte (Rue des Envierges, take Metro for Station des Couronnet, direction Nation)? Next to nothing. Yet how often I would visit him and gaze at the terrible cold glare of his picture of the dead woman on the bed.

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And Boissart, in his beautiful studio, hung with Virginia creeper, Rue de Bagneux! What an heroic figure was his. It seemed as though his roots went deep into the fruitful soil of Paris. He was immovable—there he lives for years —tremendous—saturated with the traditions of Bohemian camaraderie. A strong friend, who made my three years in the art school the happiest years of my life.

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There was Bézich, who made such beautiful copies of pictures in the Louvre, Nobody knows what that man passed through in his studio, Place de la Sorbonne. Opposite him lived another student of the Ecole des Beaux Arts, who combined business with art and made a good thing of it. I used to envy him his delightful ménage. One heard peals of laughter when one knocked at the door. We can't go in there, my dear readers. We should be de trop.

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Then, there was Couavoux! (pronounced Coo-a-voo). I should wish to tell you of his remarkable Boulevard habits. How we would stroll for hours together from café to café. His amusement at my French sayings. He would take notes of them. If I chose the wrong words he said it was more expressive. He had been married to a fat woman and was separated. I met him in Establie's. When he saw any stout woman in a restaurant he would take out his carnet and begin to sketch her. He said, "She resembles my wife."

He lived in the Rue du Croissant, where newspaper boys go to get their bundles of evening papers. There was a lugubrious café below and a lodging house upstairs. The darkness on the stairs was great. At last you arrived at his room, where there was a bed, and pictures all over the floor. He did exquisite little Louis XV. sort of ladies in the daintiest costumes. He had wandered the boulevards for ten years searching for types—he had sketch-books filled to the brim with notes "d'une facture épatante." There were delicate impressions of children in the park, nurses, card parties, young ladies caught in every pose imaginable. It was like a piece of concentrated Paris fallen within the two covers of a book and crystallised there.

Again and again he said to me: "I shall have to leave this accursed city which doesn't feed its man!"—("Je quitterai ce sacré Paris, qui ne nourrit pas son homme!")—"and go to America, to England."

"Learn," I said, "learn English. You will double your opportunities. Such work as yours must fetch its price in America."

At that moment a poor orange seller came into the shop and offered to sell oranges. He sold his wares in three languages, speaking French, English, and German to amuse us. "There!" said Couavoux, "there are the riches that your languages bring. If I learn English I shall have to sell oranges!"

We were seated in a wine-house where, if you buy a litre of wine, they allow you to sit down at the far end of the establishment at some bare wooden tables in great darkness between rows of enormous barrels. There is scarcely any light except that artificially supplied by gas. Each man brings, in a piece of newspaper, the bread he has bought outside in the baker's, the piece of cold charcuterie, the scrap of brie or camembert. One dines thus for about sixty centimes. For years Couavoux took no other meal—dined in no other place. He dispenses entirely with lunch. If I wanted to find him I must go to the wine-shop in the

Rue Poissonniére. Il s'enfonçait dans ses travaux d'artiste, ne mangeant que de la misére. Merde! quelle vie.

And yet I believe he found something picturesque in all this struggle. When he made fifty or eighty francs on a picture—a set of illustrations or a menu cover (one of which latter he once sold to the Café de la Paix) he was still to be found in the wine-shop dining for 12 sous, chatting with the poorest, those who were almost outcasts. Few of those who came there were artists. It was a resort for men who were reduced to the last economies. Some of them had known brighter fortunes, and one listened often, in that close, winey atmosphere, surrounded by the dim silhouettes of enormous wine barrels, to a fantastic medley of conversation.

Here Couavoux would make many a sketch full of character, even colouring some of them. Frequently the man he was sketching would at the conclusion of the pose come and look at it, smile, and go out to resume his life of beggary on the boulevards.

There was no man more quick of comprehension, more ready for a joke than Couavoux. He seemed to move in a Paris all of his own, of which many Parisians knew nothing.

When he changes his address he never leaves any notice of his new lodging. Yet, after months of separation, during which I have been absent in New York, we always meet again on the boulevards by mere chance, and plunge into those long, agreeable, if often almost angry discussions, where his views are diametrically opposed to mine on many points, and therefore interesting.

Sometimes in our wanderings I would insist that we should go off the beaten track. And Couavoux and I would cross the Pont des Saints-Péres and, by way of the Avenue de l'Opéra, arrive at the Boulevard des Capucines and turn into the Grand Café, because the music was good there. Here, as soon as the waiter had served us, Couavoux would bring out his carnet of sketches, and, muttering:

"Mais—quel type—regardez-moi! Non, le gros qui se ballade avec la petite blonde"—away would race his pencil, and, indifferent to the curiosity of all who surrounded us, he would see that the fat man and his fair mistress found a permanent place in his phenomenal sketch-book. Sometimes the waiters of the Grand Café were scandalized at such freedom. At other times they were amused.

I frequently admired Couavoux's work. He had no immediate market for such sketches. They were not drawn on purpose to sell. Primarily, they were drawn because

the subjects were good—parceque ses doigts d'artiste fabriquaient forcément ce qu'il trouvait intéressant.

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February 3, 1912.

So far as has been possible I have corrected my proofs—in railway carriages, on the steamer in mid-Atlantic, and while travelling on the subways of New York. I do not pretend that I have presented this book in the form in which I should like to see it; and I shall not be able to revise the final proofs at all, as I have not time to do it. Moreover, much of the material that I want is in Paris.

Certainly there is one most important omission. A new star has dawned upon the horizon of France since I began to write this book, viz., that of the scence of aviation. I have said nothing about it. This leap into the air has thrilled with a new inspiration the people of that most beautiful country. I shall never forget a certain early morning at Vincennes, when a mighty band of aviators started on their way round that gigantic racecourse called the "Circuit, Européen." The following week I was in England and saw them start on their return journey across the Channel. Later on, Beaumont and Védrines were again to be seen at Hendon, having tea amidst an admiring throng. They had returned from their race round Great Britain and had proved to the English that aviation could no longer be safely derided. It was a strange thing to see a French naval officer who, steering by the compass, had flown round our country in three days, leaving every English competitor far behind.

The Sun in all his power and majesty
Reigned in the noonday sky and all was still
When first aspiring man, weary of Earth
Filled with a strange new courage, clove through space
On wings of his own making and surveyed
From heaven's heights the map of all the Land
As only birds have seen it. Grovelling we,
Poor powerless pedestrians, raised our eyes
And, thrilled with a new hope, gazed into the blue,
Hearing a faint, insistent thunder swell
And grow in volume, till above our heads
(Far swung along invisible tides of air
Like some gigantic bee whose angry buzz
Defies the threatening elements) that craft
Slid down the trackless steepes, and the man-bird

Stood there unharmed, his steel-stayed wings scarce stained
After a thousand miles of strenuous speed.

The return of Beaumont, when he won the prize offered by Lord Northcliffe, was certainly epic. But the start of the European Circuit at Vincennes was surprising. The whole population of Paris seemed to have turned out, and to have covered the camping ground beyond the Castle at four in the morning! When the pick of the French competitors arrived in England the fields at Hendon were almost bare. The crowd that was present was composed for the greater part of Frenchmen. Indeed, the entire French colony seemed to have come out from London. "Le Journal" was being cried noisily up and down the field, and previous to the arrival of the first airman, one heard nothing but French conversation around one. The fact was, the English did not believe the competitors would ever arrive there. They missed a glorious sight.

. . . . . .

I am reading a wonderful book of Zola, called "L'Oeuvre; the Work." An artist, for whom women have no attractions, except as models, goes home one night in Paris to his solitary studio. The rain lashes the streets of the Quarter, and in the porte-cochére (the arched doorway under which a carriage would go) is hidden a girl, whom he san hardly at first see in the dark. She tells him a story of having been delayed in a train which broke down and thus arriving at Paris too late to meet a person in whose house she was to fill a new place as governess. The young man laughs at this story, having heard others so similar. He at first refuses to allow her to come in and find shelter from the terrific storm which sweeps Paris. But finally he shuts her in his sudio. He will have nothing to do with her, beyond forcing her to take his bed. He sleeps on a bench, and in the morning, waking before she does, he looks round the screen to see if she is up. She, having been afraid to sleep for a long time, was at last wrapt in slumber, and, feverish from the heat that follows the thunderstorm, has thrown off all the clothes. He seizes a palette, exclaiming, "The very pose I need! At last, for my great picture!" While she sleeps he paints her head and shoulders, even makes a complete sketch of her, for a great canvas which he has long had on his easel, but for which he could find no model to suit him. She is very upset when she awakes. He is obliged to beg her to keep

still or else she will spoil the sketch. Gradually, as they talk, she tells him of her history. She then leaves him and he does not see her for many months. In vain he seeks a model to continue the pose he has begun. They are all useless.

One day she returns while he is working, bringing him flowers. She hates the pictures he paints, which are masterly studies so far as drawing is concerned, but of the most extravagant style of painting. Meantime, the four young men, companions of youth, who were bred in the same country village; Claude, the painter, with whom we have to do; Sandoz, the literary aspirant; Gagniére, who gives up painting for music; the terrible Mahoudeau, sculptor; Dubuche, the budding architect—continue their joyous meetings in the cafés; talk till midnight over their frugal suppers, often joined by the great Bongrand, Membre de l'Institut, who has "arrived," is successful, covered with glory, a painter renowned throughout France, yet loving this Bohemian throng where such optimism is rampant. And Christine, the girl, continues her rare visits, escaping from the saintly old lady to whom she acts as companion.

Unable to finish his picture for the Salon, she one day consents to undress, and he is thus enabled to refind the marvellous lines of the nude figure which he searches as the central part of his picture. The picture is a frightful failure at the Salon des Indépendants. Thousands of people fall back on chairs in laughter at it. Old men shake their canes threateningly in the air. Mothers demand that their young daughters be moved quickly out of the room where the picture is hung; and in the midst of these shrieks of laughter and jests the four friends, leaders of a new school of painting, arrive. That night, on his return to his studio, the painter sinks sobbing to the ground, but Christine has been waiting for him in his studio, and she says, "Hush, I love you." After a night of exhilarating happiness, she flees the next day from her position as governess, they pack up the studio, and go to live in an old cottage in the country, so as to be entirely alone. But after two years of bliss, hidden away from his friends, the craving comes upon him to return to Paris. He must resume his art. With fear she sees him once more begin to abandon himself to this terrible mistress—Art. She knows she loses each day her hold upon him. At last he cares for her no more—except as a model. All day long for months she must pose for pictures which are refused in succession, ignominiously, by the Salon. All the four men are now

grown up. They still meet as before, every Thursday, at supper. But the fierce struggle for life has set most of them one against another. The art critic will no longer say anything in the newspaper which he now controls in favour of the painter or the sculptor. He explains that the public will not have anything of this new school. All the friends complain that Claude, now almost a maniac, has been their ruin. A night comes when Christine, the girl, now married to Claude, drags him at midnight from his easel, points to the hideous picture he is painting, declares that these women made of a little dust spread upon canvas have robbed her of her husband, and drags him off to a night of delirious abandon. She thinks she has triumphed. She even makes him spit upon his painting. But when she lies exhausted in the early dawn of the next day he escapes from her embrace, steals away from her side, and hangs himself opposite the vast and frightful picture he has painted. Exasperated at his failure to realise real life in his painting, he is buried in the great cemetery outside the fortifications of Paris. Alone, Sandoz, the now celebrated author, at the height of his success, and Bongrand, now descending slowing towards the age of nonentity, in the decline of his genius, stand in this cemetery, watching the burial.

But the priest's voice, as he mutters the prayers for the dead, is constantly interrupted by the frightful clatter of a train which is shunting on the railway line beyond and above the cemetery. This train gives vent to ear-piercing whistles. The buffers, clashing together, make a sound like a frightful salvo of artillery; while in a distant part of the cemetery a vast column of smoke arising from the burning of thousands of coffins which have decayed and been dug up and heaped together to make room for a new generation of dead, gradually spreads its ominous pall above their heads.

This is a book by the man whose works are often called immoral—by those who have never read them.

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February 12, 1912.

There comes a knock on my door. I knew we had left out somebody. Now it is Halet, who comes in to smoke a pipe and pass the time of day.

Halet is an Oxford and Cambridge University man, who came to Paris to study in a "Tabac." I know Tabacs are not generally considered seminaries where academic instruction may be had, and it is true that Halet wandered up

to lectures at the Sorbonne sometimes—for he was studying for his Licence es Lettres. But his principal occupation was—in the Tabac. For the benefit of the uninitiated I may say that the Tabac was a little tobacco shop just opposite the Hotel de l' Univers, where Halet and I lived in the Rue Monsieur le Prince. In this tobacco shop one could also buy stamps, postcards, and postal orders. Every tabac in Paris sells stamps and is for this reason sheltered under the wing of the Government. Yet strange, interesting, and unofficial happenings may take place in a tabac, as I shall hope to show. For a tabac supplies wine in unlimited quantities to those who can pay for it. And, as wine and women are popularly supposed to run together, this tabac also offered you, as you sipped your Mominette, agreeable facilities for the enjoyment of female society. Naturally the tabac of a certain street becomes one of the places of rendezvous in that street. But in this special tabac meals were also provided, and thus one could always find Halet eating his midday and evening meal "en famille" with the proprietor of the tabac, his wife, and their few boarders. It was here that Halet mastered, to their last detail, the utmost intricacies of French argot—without a profound knowledge of which no one can understand the current conversation of a group of swearing Frenchmen.

Here sat Halet, who knew all that was worth knowing of Greek and Latin, was a Master of Arts, and a pastmaster as regards the bouquet of rare wines; and here he learnt many things which they forget to teach you in the University of the Sorbonne.

It was Halet who first showed me what study meant. It was he who pointed out to me the folly of promiscuous, aimless reading. He read with a definite aim in view, according to a schedule of books intelligently compiled by the best French professors and English dons. It was in his rooms that I discovered for the first time the history of "French Literature" (Frs. 4.50 at Hachettes) and the "History of English Literature," by George Saintsbury, each of them a perfect well and fount of information. By the time one has read and digested the books indicated in the "History of French Literature" one is au courant with all the classics of France.

Moreover, it was part of Halet's curriculum in the preparation of the French degree which he was to take, to translate old French poetry (which didn't resemble modern French in the least) into Latin, and I believe even into Greek. Along such lines of study as these it may easily be imagined that my good friend Halet and myself tem-

porarily parted company, and while he, stretched in his great cane chair, unravelled the most intricate difficulties of these cross-translations, I read his Moliére (which he had bought at a wonderful bargain, in three tomes, all the plays being illustrated), or the life of Voltaire; and all the while he would illumine my French reading with the most witty and delightful commentaries.

Halet and I met for the first time in the Tabac Opposite. We spoke French to each other, but we speedily discovered that we were both Englishmen, and both sons of clergy. Soon after this he took up his residence in the Hotel de l'Univers, and our acquaintance ripened and mellowed, for there is nothing like a comradeship of reading to ensure peaceful and uninterrupted friendship. What I lacked in scholarship my friend possessed in abundance. He has known the luxury of two separate University educations, one at Cambridge and the other at Oxford. Although younger than myself, he had travelled abundantly and well. As one of the Cape Mounted Police he had scoured the whole of the Transvaal. Later on he accepted a tutorship in a college in Germany. And now he was enjoying three years of study in Paris.

Oxford was his home. He knew every inch of the High. No shady nooks of the river were hid from him. He understood the secrets of punting and all that was dignified and droll in college life. Saturated with the traditions of the University, at home among the classics, he was yet the most Bohemian of Bohemians, and in Paris he not only set the pace to students who were natives of the city, but outran, in the ingenuity and invention of his quaint inventions, all the raciest traditions of the Latin Quarter. He reigned like a king in the tabac of Rue Monsieur le Prince, where he was known as "Le Maitre Henri." Paris was to him what water is to a fish; there he could swim faster, laugh louder, learn quicker, and sleep less than anywhere else in the world.

Halet took an interest in all my paintings, and many were the sketches I made of him.

He was an intimate friend of the parrot who lived in the courtyard of the hotel, and he taught this bird to cry out quite clearly such legendary sayings as:

"Not a word to the wife!"

"That's put the tin hat on it!"

"Chance your arm!"

It breaks my heart to remember how all this is bound up so intimately with the past—the days that perhaps won't return.

Halet was also favourably known to a black cat. How often I myself have returned at about 5 a. m. and found that cat lying on the table that stood in the entrance-hall. Its unblinking eyes were fixed upon me as though to say: "Mum's the word. I'm not asking any questions."

I remember some lovely summer mornings when Halet, who had just come home, opened his window and called across the court "Good-morning" to me. His bowler hat was pushed back far on his head, and he would burst into a glory of song:

"I wonder what the girl I'm thinking of—
Is thinking——of——me——!"

It is breakfast time, and Halet had just arrived. Well, these summer mornings abide in my memory. The parrot was crying out, "François! Francois!" in the courtyard, and presently Halet would make his tea, and arm in arm we would stroll into the Luxembourg Gardens.

"O bliss, when all in circle drawn
About him, heart and ear were fed
To hear him as he lay and read
The Tuscan poets on the lawn."

These charming gardens, with the pigeons cooing, the waters falling from the Fontaine de Medicis, and the great trees aglow with green. Halet had a long, folding chair and a compact tea service, and these he would take out under the trees, and while he drank tea he would study "The History of France from the Earliest Times to the Fall of the Second Empire in 1870," by W. R. Jervis, or "The Third French Republic," by Richard Lawton, or "Le Siége de Paris," by Francisque Sarcey.

I would become enthusiastic about a course of study, and there under the trees, while the pigeons cooed their soft approval, he would tell me how, one day, when I had time, I must take my Baccalaureat. "That," he said, " is passed in two parts—'Letters and Philosophy' or 'Science and Mathematics.' 'Letters and Philosophy' is the best. You buy the 'Programme du Baccalaureat," published by Delaliam, opposite the Sorbonne, for 50 centimes. After you have passed the letters you must go in one year for the 'Philosophy.' You will have to read a certain number of French philosophic books, and Hume, Locke, or Adams Smith in English. Once you have passed your 'Baccalaureat' it is all right. You inscribe yourself as

student in the Sorbonne, and go to one or two lectures. The 'Baccalaureat' costs you Frs. 140 altogether. After that you have to go to the Sorbonne four times in the year, and take four 'inscriptions,' beginning in November, between the 1st and the 15th of that month; then between January 1 and 15, of March, and of May. Each inscription costs you Frs. 32.50. Included in this sum is a ten-franc a year subscription for use of the library. When you have taken your four 'inscriptions' you can go in for the Licence whenever you please."

How I envied those who had the leisure and means thus to follow up some serious course of study.

Halet himself was always lucky. He would secure the most luxurious travelling tutorships whenever he wanted them. He dressed well, but had a fatal habit of losing his belongings. His capabilities as a cook were great. Despite all sorts of disadvantages he passed his examination in the Sorbonne. His thirst (for knowledge) was unquenchable. Alas! are those days, indeed, gone by when he stood erect on the table of the Tabac in order (as he termed it) to "trinquer avec le bon Dieu." The glass aloft in his hand, he harangued in faultless French an admiring crowd on the day his success at the Sorbonne was announced, and shortly afterwards he left our street, to return to his beautiful home in Oxford; and when, months afterwards, I visited him there, I found him so staid and quiet, so decorous and conventional that I could not help asking myself: "Is this the Halet I knew in Paris, the friend of parrots and of black cats, the popular hero of the Tabac Opposite, the legendary figure who made history in Rue Monsieur le Prince, and whom I shall always see, easily yet faultlessly attired, standing upon the table, his face illumined with an hospitable smile, calling out to all and sundry, 'Mesdames, Messieurs, je léve mon verre á la santé de tout le monde'?"

E. B. P.

THE END.

POT-POURRI PARISIEN

by

E. BRYHAM PARSONS

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